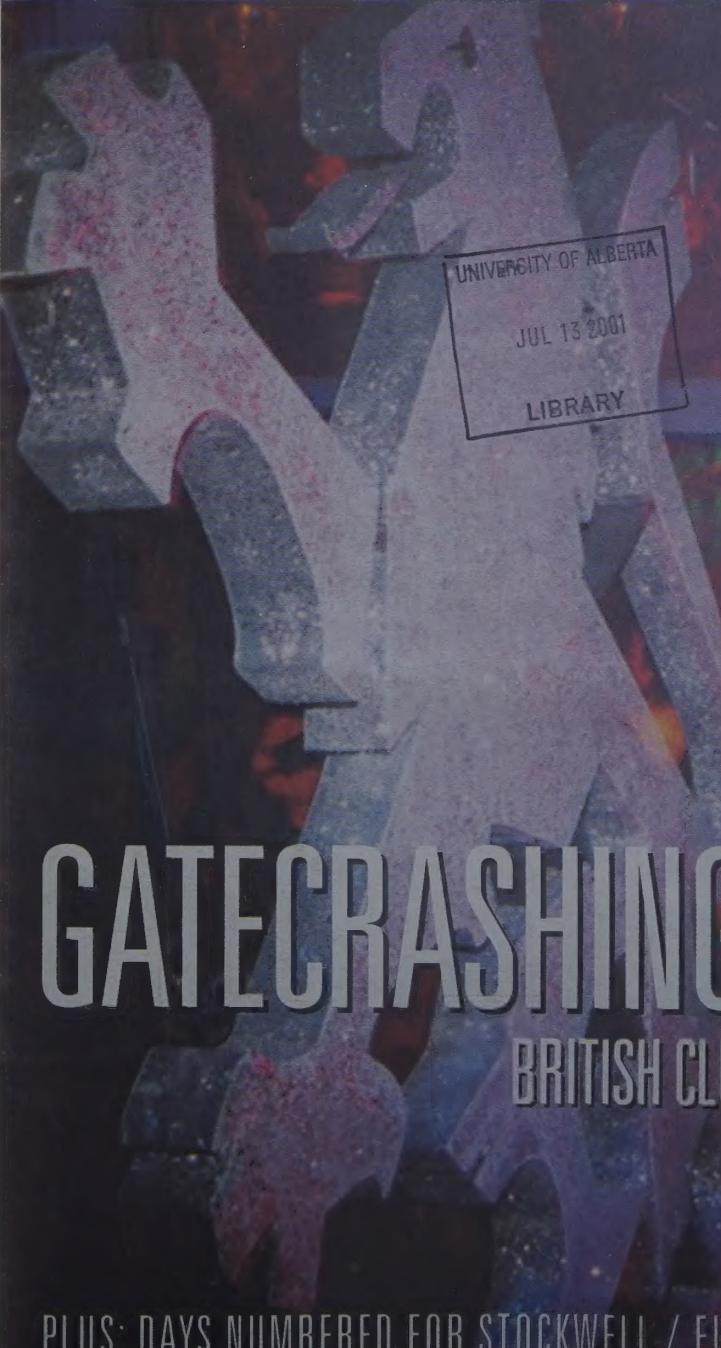


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BY DAVE JOHNSTON

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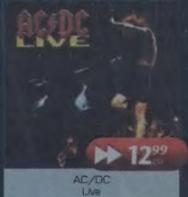
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## ECAs up their sleeve

Distrust the WTO and IMF? Export credit agencies are even worse

BY BRUCE RICH

Recent anti-globalization protests have sparked greater debate on trade, but the spotlight on the roles of the World Trade Organization, the IMF and World Bank is incomplete. Much more attention needs to be focussed on export credit agencies. Export credit agencies (ECAs)—like the U.S. and Japanese Export-Import Banks, Germany's Hermes Guarantee, France's COFACE and Italy's SACE—use government funds to subsidize development projects around the world. ECAs dwarf international institutions like the World Bank in aggregate financial clout and real-world impact.

ECAs subsidize almost eight per cent of annual world trade. Government-supported loans, guarantees and insurance schemes back up more than \$400 billion worth of annual exports—and more than \$50 billion a year is devoted to big infrastructure projects in developing countries. This exceeds the combined financial assistance of all multilateral and bilateral aid agencies.

Much like the WTO, ECAs have a single-issue agenda: *trade above all*. Advocates of economic globalization promise benefits for all involved, including the poor and the environment. With ECAs, the opposite is true. These agencies promote projects that, in many cases, development agencies won't support because they are economically unsound and environmentally unsustainable, projects that have the primary goal of benefiting corporations in rich countries, not the residents of the country receiving assistance. It's a classic mercantilist strategy.

Arms exports are a top priority for many European ECAs. In the decade of the 1990s, about a third of the exports guaranteed by the British Export Credits and Guarantee Department (ECGD) and France's COFACE were weapons sales. Germany's Hermes scored a coup several years ago when it managed to help sell off a fleet of obsolete East German naval vessels to Suharto's Indonesia.

### Hot dam!

ECA-backed projects account for a quarter of all developing-country debt, public and private, and for 56 per cent of the public, official debt owed to governments and international agencies. Much of this debt stems from dubious investments that aid agencies have refused to support. A well-known example is the Three Gorges Dam in China. In 1996, the German, Swiss, Swedish, Canadian and French ECAs all competed for the chance to finance this project, which the World Bank and U.S. Export Import Bank had refused to support on environmental grounds. Meanwhile, in Turkey, eight ECAs are considering handing out more than \$850 million for the proposed Ilisu Dam, a project which will affect the Tigris River, near the Syrian and Iraqi border, and will displace as many as 75,000 Kurdish refugees.

Some governments are now showing a growing sense of responsibility for these agencies. Gordon Brown, the British finance minister, announced last year that the British Export Credits and Guarantee Department would halt guarantees for arms sales to some of the world's poorest countries. Several ECAs have begun to put in place rudimentary environmental reviews.

But reform has been slow. Over the last five years, at the Organization for Economic Co-operation and

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**yourVUE****The long Black veil**

Re: "Hypocri-SEE," VuePoint, June 28

As a regular reader of both alternative weeklies in Edmonton, I count myself lucky to experience a proliferation of left-leaning media in this city. I find I experience views in both SEE and Vue that I would be unlikely to find in Edmonton's mainstream media.

However, I take issue with Vue's continuing war to undermine SEE Magazine's image with past cover-issue features, past Media Jungle columns and, recently, this past editorial column by Paul Matwychuk.

In this column, Mr. Matwychuk dissected SEE's recent editorial on Fred Phelps' right-wing hatemongers, implying an obvious hypocrisy was present in this editorial because of a hatemongering Conrad Black ownership.

I say that another side is more obvious, and that side consists of humourous irony, in the existence of the editorial, and courage on the part of the editor in writing a differing opinion than the owner and his employer. Dan Rubinstein of "Media Jungle" boldly pushes the boundary in critiquing his employer's main competitor, but does he have the same freedom to criticize Vue's shortcomings? I have yet to see.

**COVER STORY:** If Simon Raine has his way, Gatecrasher, his influential U.K. dance club, will soon be as much of a lifestyle brand as Virgin—and right now he's setting his sights on conquering North America. Will he succeed? Dave Johnston weighs in on the matter • 19

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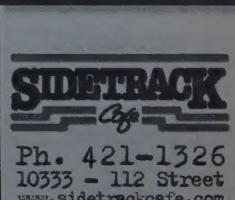
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BY DAVID STUART

### O frabjous Day!

"Ladies and gentlemen, direct from our home office in Red Deer, Alberta, I have tonight's Top Ten List: The Top Ten Names the Breakaway Alliance MPs Should Call Their New Party:

"Number 10: The Alliance of Reformed Reformers;

"9. The Party Formerly Known as the Canadian Alliance;

"8. The Party to Ensure the Liberals Remain in Power Forever;

"7. The Like A Rat Deserting A Sinking Ship (L.A.R.D.A.S.S.) Party;

"6. The 'I Can't Believe It's Not Alliance' Party;

"5. The Reform-A-Tories;

"4. The 'United? Yeah, Right!' Party;

"3. The Historical Footnote Party;

"2. 'Survivor IV: The Canadian Backbench';

"And finally, the number one name the breakaway Alliance MPs should call their new party: The Lock Stock in a Barrel and Have a Party!"

• • •

But seriously, folks. Forgive me for starting this column on such an uncharacteristically flip note, but I can't help it. The endgame of the game of checkers—it's not being played intelligently enough to call it chess—that is the Canadian Alliance leadership crisis has me positively giddy. I've got a grin from ear to ear, I've got a spring in my step, for the first time in a long time I can ponder the future of Canadian politics with optimistic curiosity rather than resigned fatalism.

"Booy," I bet you're thinking, "this guy must *really* hate Stockwell Day!" And you're right, I do, but it's not Day's spectacular fall from grace that has me waxing so rhapsodic. Schadenfreude

can only go so far, and I'm really not that cynical a person. (Okay, I'll admit I'm enjoying the fact that Stock's disapproval rating among the general Canadian public, according to a recent poll, is 73 per cent—only three percentage points less than the worst Brian Mulroney ever experienced. But that's all.)

No, I'm genuinely happy because hiding in the wings of this right-wing soap opera is a statement about Canadian democracy, a phrase that on my worst days I used to consider an oxymoron like "military intelligence" or "journalistic ethics." But the fact that a Canadian party leader, whose authority and right to govern is fervently protected by our political system (and especially so in the case of the Canadian Alliance and its commitment to grassroots populism), can nevertheless be ousted by the caucus members who have to deal with his competence, or lack thereof, every day.

Watching Stockwell Day get his comeuppance is merely icing on the cake. And for the record, I don't hate him because he's right-wing, or because he's intolerant, or because he's a liar ("Spy? I never met a spy! Oh, that spy..."). I hate him because he values image over substance, and because he insults everyone's intelligence with his utterly transparent wetsuit shenanigans. (It's the shenanigans that are utterly transparent, not the wetsuit, thank goodness.)

In most parliamentary democracies, party leaders are chosen by their caucuses; therefore, said caucuses can also fire them at will, a maneuver Irish politicians ruefully refer to as "The Heave." (The Heave was most recently practised on the Emerald Isle last January, when opposition Fine Gael party leader and former Taoiseach (prime minister) John Bruton was unceremoniously given the boot by his own supporters in the Dáil (parliament), who feared he just wasn't colourful enough to attract voters.)

Perhaps the most famous Heave in modern times happened to Margaret Thatcher. The fact that she ruled the U.K. with an iron fist for a decade didn't help her in November 1990 when then-backbencher, now-Conservative leader William Hague organized a movement to end her rule in favour of John Major, who was (inaccurately, as

it turns out) seen as the Tories' only hope for re-election.

The Heave is an important check on the power of party leaders, and especially prime ministers; for this reason, it exists in almost every parliamentary democracy in the world, with the notable exception of Canada. Our first prime minister, John A. Macdonald, was appointed party leader by his caucus, so had to keep their agendas in mind lest he find himself replaced by someone more amenable to consensus-building (a description that certainly doesn't fit Stockwell Day).

Yet since the Liberal convention in 1919 which appointed William Lyon Mackenzie King head Grit, party delegates have chosen their leaders—and the Canadian Alliance further removed the process from caucus by having the party membership at large participate in the vote. It's hard to argue with the mandate implicit in Stockwell Day's 63 per cent support and almost 100 per cent margin of victory over Preston Manning; and no matter how badly he screwed up, it was common wisdom as recently as a week ago that he would manage to hold on to power until April, when the party's constitution called for a leadership review.

Ironically, the *coup de grâce* was delivered by the Canadian Alliance party's completely undemocratic, unelected executive; once they turned against Day, suddenly "everybody knew" the Alliance leader was a dead man Stocking.

The fact that Canadian party caucuses can't fire their leaders has always been a bane for Canadian democracy; once elected, they can virtually do anything without fear of reprisal, as Day has proved. It is therefore extremely heartening to see that even though caucuses can't perform The Heave, they are still capable of taking action which results in the removal of a party leader. This bodes well for Canadian democracy; in fact, it's the first step toward a more democratic system Canada has taken since Trudeau first started consolidating his power in the late '60s.

So I'm going to continue to smile, up to and past the day when Stockwell Day finally steps down; and I think I speak for most Canadians when I offer Mr. Day my sincerest

hopes that the door doesn't hit him on the ass on his way out.

• • •

The top ten list at the top of this article was chosen by me from among the suggestions posted by visitors to the Bourque Newswatch website at [www.bourque.org](http://www.bourque.org). Pierre Bourque (no relation to the mayor of Montreal with exactly the same name) is the Matt Drudge of Canadian politics. He's much more intelligent, polite and substantiated than his American colleague—but then, he's Canadian.

Bourque set up a contest, asking visitors to suggest names the rebel Alliance MPs (say, that's a good *Star Wars* name right there: the Rebel Alliance) could use if they decided to form their own political party. While it's all in jest—and a pretty darn hilarious jest, for that matter—Bourque disappointed me by being uncharacteristically inaccurate.

From all parts of the media, we've been hearing about this "magic number" of 12 MPs needed to gain official party status in the House of Commons. While that's technically correct, it leaves out a lot of crucial details. It's not as though 12 sitting MPs can just decide to declare themselves a new party, ask the Speaker for recognition and then start spending their increased research budgets and asking their allotted questions during Question Period that afternoon.

The Speaker won't even entertain such a request unless the new political party is registered with Elections Canada. And Elections Canada won't even entertain such a request unless the new party has a name, a leader, at least 100 party members and 50 candidates for the next election. That means that the dissident MPs would pretty much have to convince their riding associations—you know, the ones made up of people who overwhelmingly elected Stockwell Day as their leader—to jump ship, never to return to the Canadian Alliance. That will be a tough sell.

But as usual, the media drone on about 12 MPs and official party status without doing their homework. It's typical of most broadcast and broadsheet hacks, but I expected better from Pierre Bourque. ☺

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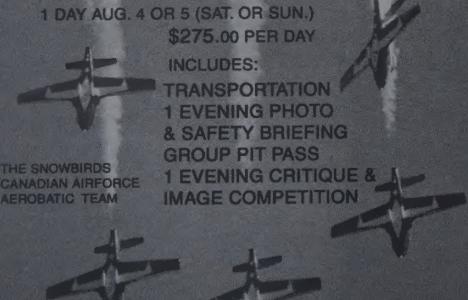
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### Canada harbours a sludge

ST. JOHN'S—Everybody knows that Canada is far more advanced than its southern neighbour in terms of environmental protection, that acid rain produced by unfeeling American corporations with effective lobbyists falls on our Canuck heads as we protect our pristine lakes, forests and oceans.

Well, two out of three ain't bad. The day after Canada Day, the *Boston Globe* ran an exposé on Canada's disgraceful disregard of its oceans. While not a single American city dumps untreated waste into its salt-water harbours, very few Canadian coastal cities have even rudimentary sewage treatment. St. John's, Halifax and Victoria, all provincial capitals, dump human excrement and industrial waste directly into the ocean, creating harbour pollution on a scale that rivals ports in the Third World.

All told, more than 211 million gallons of utterly untreated waste flow into Canada's oceans every day; another 634 million gallons from cities like Vancouver, Montreal and Charlottetown enter the water after being filtered of physical refuse, but with no treatment for bacteria or the over 200 toxic industrial pollutants that have been identified in Canada's oceanic waste.

"It's ugly, it's smelly, it's unhealthy," St. John's-based environmental activist Beni Malone told the *Globe*. "It's our national embarrassment, from sea to stinking sea."

All of this waste contravenes the federal Fisheries Act, which prohibits polluting the habitat of endangered marine life. Yet Ottawa appears to lack the political will to force municipalities to spend the money required—\$60 million for St. John's, or about \$600 a head (pardon the pun)—to clean up their act. Some fisherman's groups have brought charges against polluting cities, but Crown prosecutors have without exception failed to follow through.

So promises are made, studies are commissioned—and in the meantime, every turd flushed down coastal Canadian toilets soon finds its way into the waterways. It's been decades since New York Harbour's pollution was so bad it coined a euphemism for discarded condoms floating by Coney Island—perhaps the torch should now be passed, and we should start referring to "Victoria Island Whitefish." —DAVID STUART

## GLOBALIZATION

### FTAA URL OK'd

The protests that greeted the Organization of American States summit in Quebec City last month were not in vain; in response, the Canadian government has taken the unprecedented



step of making public a very preliminary and very draft text of the Free Trade Area of the Americas trade agreement.

The 400-page negotiating text of the FTAA—which, if passed, would create the largest free-trade zone in the world—has been posted on the website of the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade.

Never before has Canada officially promulgated the negotiating text of a trade agreement; presumably the lesson of the now-defunct Multilateral Agreement on Investment (MAI) trade pact has been taken to heart, as outcry from the media and (to a limited extent) the public against the secrecy surrounding the negotiations ended up scuttling the deal.

Of course, the feds aren't admitting that they were prodded into making this unusual move; on the website's FAQ (frequently asked questions) page, they brag that Canada was the driving force behind a consensus to release the draft text. A condition of this consensus was that the text be available in all four official languages of the OAS; the Canadian government managed to make the whole website available in English, French, Spanish and Portuguese, making the FTAA text accessible not just to Canadians, but to every citizen in North and South America. Well, the ones who can read and who don't speak a creole.

So before you throw your next Molotov cocktail, why not find out exactly what you're protesting against? You can find the negotiating text of the Free Trade Area of the Americas online at [www.dfaid-maeci.gc.ca/tna-nac/ftaa-e.asp](http://www.dfaid-maeci.gc.ca/tna-nac/ftaa-e.asp). —DAVID STUART

### Disney top winner at the Sweatin's

TORONTO—Mirror, mirror on the wall, who runs the cruelest sweatshop of them all?

According to Toronto-based

Maquila Solidarity Network and Oxfam Canada, that honour goes to Disney—the company's movie tie-in merchandise and clothing has the odious odour of the sweatshop around it.

Oxfam and Maquila polled consumers from across the globe, asking "Who is the greatest violator of them all?" and Disney edged Wal-Mart in the voting. Disney's crimes? According to Maquila's awards rap sheet, they "can be attributed to a report by the Hong Kong Christian Industrial Committee (CIC) documenting sweatshop abuses in 12 Disney supply factories in China. The report charges that young women migrant workers making Disney clothes, toys and accessories were forced to work up to 16 hours a day, six or seven days a week, for wages as low as \$90 CAD a month."

Wal-Mart, whose principal owner also controls Doug Weight's new employer, the St. Louis Blues, finished second, but "won" the Sweatshop Smokescreen Award for "allegedly misleading customers about its association with a Chinese factory producing Kathie Lee handbags. Workers were reportedly locked in the plant for all but 60 minutes a day, forced to work up to 90 hours a week, punched and hit for talking back to managers and charged large portions of their salaries for food and lodging."

Ironically, Wal-Mart has also been nominated by the Canadian Retail Council as Socially Responsible Retailer of the year. That mainstream nomination, coupled with the alleged sweatshop abuses, was enough of a Jekyll-and-Hyde complex to win the Smokescreen Award.

But the Maquila/Oxfam findings weren't all bad. Liz Claiborne was lauded with the Transparency Award for making public a report about abuses at one of its plants in Guatemala. While Maquila did not exonerate Claiborne, the group did say that Claiborne's willingness to own up to its abuses is a step in the right direction. —STEVEN SANDOR

## ECONOMICS

### Canada on road to monetary integration with U.S., warns MP

REGINA—Maverick NDP MP Lorne Nystrom is worried that the Liberal Party may be more serious about integrating American and Canadian currencies than they've let on.

Nystrom came out swinging over a Bank of Canada plan to turn over control of the Canada Savings Bond program from Ottawa to EDS Canada, a private firm owned by the EDS Corporation, based in Texas. Not only was Nystrom shocked that the feds would decide to outsource CSB, but he also thinks it could be the first step toward monetary integration with the United States.

Earlier this year, a TD Canada Trust white paper suggested Canada would become fiscally stronger if it harmonized currencies with the United States. At the time, that report was shrugged off by Ottawa—but Nystrom believes that the sell-off is an indication that the TD report may indeed be more prophetic than speculation.

"No government in the world, including, of course, the United States, ever engaged in this kind of sellout of one of the most crucial symbols of national sovereignty," Nystrom said from his Regina Qu'Appelle riding. It is another step towards the privatization by stealth of the Bank of Canada, which is a prelude to a full monetary integration with the U.S. There are no further doubts on the true agenda of what I believe will be remembered as the most right-wing government in Canadian history."

Instead of outsourcing CSB, Nystrom said the feds should reintroduce the \$1,000 tax credit—a reward for Canadians who decide to invest in their own nation. —STEVEN SANDOR

## VUEPOINT

BY DAVID STUART

### We're not number one—hooray!

Canada will end up in third place in the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) annual human development index (HDI) for 2001; it's only the second time in the nine-year history of the ranking of nations in terms of quality of life that Canada will fall to finish in first place.

Thank God—we'll have a year's respite from jingoistic "We're number one!" rhetoric from politicians that entirely ignores the point of the index and grossly exaggerates both its significance and its validity.

Every year, the UNDP protests Canadian politicians' insistence on turning a sociological tool into a political football, declaring that the United Nations considers Canada the best country in the world to live in. The protests fall on deaf ears; to Canadians used to being ignored on the world scene, such approbation is as intoxicating as a drug.

However, the HDI is only one of dozen of indexes produced by the United Nations each year—Canada has never placed first in any of the rest, including two equally important indexes calculated by the UNDP. Canada places eighth in gender equality and 11th in poverty rate, two statistics which must surely have some bearing on *real* quality of life (as opposed to the HDI's measure, which takes into account life expectancy, adult literacy, education and average income).

And oversimplification is not the HDI's only flaw—although no Canadian politician would ever dare admit it, many experts consider the formula used to calculate the index fatally flawed. The HDI's measure of average income is extremely skewed away from affluent nations—so much so that Costa Rica, with an average income of less than \$6,000 (U.S.), scores 95 points out of 100 while the United States, with an average income of over \$27,000, scores 99. There are those who might argue that four times the income represents more than a four per cent increase in quality of life.

The HDI may be like a drug to Canadians, but it's a placebo: it's devoid of substance, and when Canada finds itself robbed of its first-place ranking, the country does not go into withdrawal. Rather, the prime minister simply carefully avoids mention of the HDI during Canada Day celebrations, hoping for a better result next year. I, however, am hoping Canada continues to avoid a first-place finish so that we can find a more realistic and substantive reason to take pride in our country, and address those aspects of our society which need to be improved. ☺



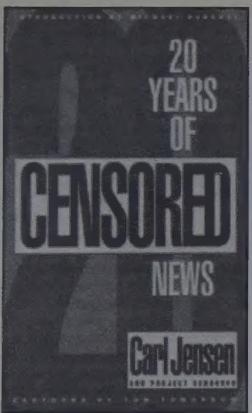
By DANA McNAIRN

## Hitting the Loompanics button

Last summer found me buzzing around New York City for a few days on a travel assignment. One of the non-tourist destinations I wanted to check out was decidedly off the map. It was a small, obscure publishing house called Loompanics, a company that specializes in the controversial, dangerous and outright illegal. I had a smudgy address for somewhere around Times Square, but couldn't find it anywhere—and with my flat Canadian accent, New Yorkers helpfully pointed me instead in the direction of Lincoln Center and Lexington Avenue. One woman kindly asked if I meant the "Statue of Leh-burrry," slowly stretching out the word and showing her teeth, just in case I was still trying to get the hang of English. So I never did find this little anarchists' paradise of the printed word. Given the recent Disneyfied gentrification of the area, it seemed more likely that Loompanics had simply high-tailed it out of Times Square altogether.

With all the fall frenzy of Big Book Publishing, the hubbub of award ceremonies, reviewers' fat request lists for the latest sensations and heavy betting on Next Big Literary Thing (oh, yeah and a quickie blurb in the *Globe and Mail*), my thoughts once again turned to Loompanics. This time I logged onto their website ([loompanics.com](http://loompanics.com)) and discovered the publisher was boasting a new address in Washington state.

How I wish I had found that New York storefront, if only to hold in my hands just one of this company's illustrious titles. Loompanics was founded in 1980 by the intrepid Michael Hoy, who proudly trumpets



the publishing company as the "lunatic fringe for the libertarian movement." While encouraging his readers to think and do for themselves, Hoy merely wishes to provide a pleasurable forum for the dissemination of ideas in the "undying spirit of human freedom and resistance to tyranny." Calling all survivalists (and slackers) with a strong allergy to authority or governments of any kind. The online table of contents helpfully categorizes this "resistance to tyranny" with sections on making money, protecting privacy, sex, drugs, conspiracy theories, smuggling and general mayhem.

For example, under the revenge heading I spotted the timely tome *Screw the Bitch! A Man's Guide to Divorce* by the aptly named Dick Hart. I searched in vain for a companion volume, perhaps titled *How to Whack Your Husband* (aren't anarchists also practising egalitarians?), but had to make do with the more rounded *Becoming a Successful Mass Murderer or Serial Killer*. Budding chemists will be pleased to find those trickier titles the library never stocks, like *Middle Eastern Terrorist Bomb Design and Practical LSD Manufacture*. For those harbouring paranoid delusions, crack the spine of *Modern Camouflage*, or *The Police-*



*man Is Your Friend and Other Lies*, or *101 Things to Do 'Til the Revolution*. Those nervous Nellies may also find comfort contained within the thoughtful analysis of *Send in the Waco Killers*. My favourite is the endearingly chivalrous *How to Get Your Filipina Fiancée to the U.S.*

Feeling empowered by my reawakened libertarian rights, I typed "opium" into Hoy's on-site search engine and was rewarded with nine matching titles. "Stealing" netted me five books—and whereas the seemingly more precise request "handguns" garnered a scant three titles, the all-purpose search for "guns" delivered a whopping 25 matches. Included in this batch was the disarmingly titled *A Do-It-Yourself Submachine Gun*. The jacket copy waxes rapturously: "The increasingly restrictive and over-regulated society in which we live calls for extraordinary measures. This homemade submachine gun fits the bill."

Rugged individualists, control freaks and the otherwise marginalized may wish to keep all this sagacious yet earnest advice in mind with our federal election just around the corner and the upcoming tiresome holiday season. After all, didn't some wiseacre once say that knowledge is power? ☀



By DANA McNAIRN

## Vexed at Expo

Attendance was up at this year's Toronto BookExpo—the annual trade show that puts (pits?) publishers and booksellers together as they pretend to play nice (but at least everyone scored a loud book bag or two to haul away their loot)—so anyone still bitching about the sorry state of Canadian book publishing can just give it a rest. Now, More authors will be published and tour this fall than we've seen in the last three or four years.

Grumbling and gossip was rife on the trade show floor as Chapters—who has boycotted BookExpo for the last two years—sent out over 700 delegates to roam the giant Metro Toronto Convention Centre downtown. Huge sore point with some. Why? Because even though Chapters isn't a member of the Canadian Booksellers Association, the U.S.-based Reed Exhibition Companies now puts on the annual trade show and they aren't interested in excluding any booksellers, no matter how rancorous the relationship. An Edmonton bookseller (who refused to give her name) pointedly told the *Toronto Star*, "I don't care what you call it, Chapters or Chindigo, it's still a monopoly."

## Ricci is rich

Author Nino Ricci is rumoured to have received a cool \$500,000 advance for his next book, *Testament*, to be published next spring by Doubleday Canada. That has to be some kind of record in Canadian publishing circles or I'm a six-foot blonde. *Testament* is billed as a "retelling of the life of Jesus." Hmm. It's been done before and this isn't exactly walk-in-the-park fiction—Norman Mailer attempted something similar with *The Gospel According to the Son*, as did Nikos Kazantzakis with *The Last Temptation of Christ* and as far as I know in some Texan backwater they're still picketing. Ricci said at an author's breakfast that he wanted to imagine Jesus as not so much a "divine figure" but rather "a human being, a teacher in some remote corner of the Roman empire."

Anne McDermid, Ricci's agent, says Doubleday won in a bidding war against McClelland and Stewart not because of the money involved but because Doubleday's enthusiasm was "completely unparalleled." Doubleday's young, young publisher Maya Mayjee chirped up and breathlessly exclaimed she wants to position *Testament* as the "book of the year." No shit? Of course her enthusiasm has nothing to do with recouping—that god-awful-advance-or-some-heads-are-really-going-to-roll hand sweats goin' on over at Doubleday.

## Arrivin' Kicking

The most anticipated "secret" book that everyone knew about anyway was announced during a swish press conference. Liberal backroom strategist and piranha Warren Kinsella—wait for it—will publish *Kicking Ass in Canadian Politics*, an "explosive behind-the-scenes look at political spin wars," in September with Random House. (Trevor, you owe me a beer.)

Is it just me, or am I the only one who thinks Kinsella looks like a younger, less flabby Bill Murray? Yet this is the same guy who's been called a political "hit man" and who smilingly admits his work philosophy is "take your shot and make it hurt." The highly entertaining press conference was also replete with men in dark suits and sunglasses muttering into cell phones. Kinsella fondly recalled the days hounding then-prime minister Kim Campbell as she hotly pursued a \$5.8 billion dollar contract for attack helicopters "because she figured Canada faced a terrific threat from the North Korean navy." The room roared its appreciation. Kinsella, grinning like a hyena, closed by saying, "I will now give shifty, vague non-answers to any questions you might have."

By the way, his book includes "Twelve Handy Tips for Surviving

SEE NEXT PAGE

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## THREE DOLLAR BILL

By RICHARD BURNETT

### The boys of summer

I love baseball. I love the smell of an old mitt, the feel of a ball's stitching rubbed hard against my palm and I love watching players—like the gorgeous and glorious Expos poster boy Vladimir Guerrero—stretching their extraordinary bodies for that breathtaking play of the week.

Which is why, following Major League Baseball's time-honoured mid-summer classic All-Star Game this week, I thought it was time we celebrated the Montreal Expos, who'd still be Canada's team if the CBC would look beyond SkyDome.

While most Canadians over the last century have preferred to worship our hockey legends, Montreal was also home to the Montreal Royals, the then-Brooklyn Dodgers Triple A team that was home to Duke Snider, Tommy Lasorda and Jackie Robinson before Jackie broke the major league colour barrier. Today, minor-league pro baseball is proudly played across Canada by the Ottawa Lynx (Expos), the Vancouver Canadians (Athletics), Calgary Cannons (Marlins), the Medicine Hat Blue Jays (Toronto's Rookie Advanced Class) and, of course, the Edmonton Trappers (Angels).

It was my father who introduced me to my first baseball gods. I remember as a kid leaning over the railing between home plate and the dugout at Montreal's Jarry Park during batting practice and asking players for their autograph: a young Nolan Ryan in town with the visiting New York Mets; Mack Jones, the first Expo to ever hit a grand slam; and Rusty Staub, Number 10, Le Grand Orange, who owned the city as surely as Gary Carter did later.

More recently, it was watching my all-time favourite player, Tim Raines, steal both his 500th and 800th career bases (the latter in a Yankee uniform) at the Big O with my father by my side, and, last season, bringing my seven-year-old nephew Skye to his first Expos game.

I remember my old high-school math teacher drinking whiskey from his coffee cup while listening to "nos amours" on his transistor radio in class during the 1981 playoffs. I remember screaming and jumping for joy in the

bleachers, high-fiving strangers as Larry Walker hit a bottom-of-the-ninth, two-out, three-run homer in August 1994 to win a game 9-7. And there was the mind-blowing 10-minute standing ovation for the return of Expos legend Tim Raines—just days after I'd nervously interviewed the man for the first time—at this year's home-opener.

But not all of it's been good.

There were the player strikes, of course, in 1981 and 1994, and Montreal paid the price twice. Then there's always noted homophobe Tommy Lasorda, who had gay outfielder Glenn Burke traded to Oakland in May 1978 because Burke refused to stop hanging out with Lasorda's gay son. (Both Burke and Lasorda Jr. would later die of AIDS.) In fact, it seems when poor Tommy didn't get his way, he got mad—real mad. Once, after an (accurate) call against the Dodgers at the Big O, a livid Lasorda had—get this—Expos mascot Youppi! thrown out of the game.

And while this season the Chicago Cubs have already placed 10 full-page ads in the gay weekly *Chicago Free Press*—Wrigley Field borders Chicago's "Boys Town," a neighbourhood full of gay bars and establishments and home to over 40,000 gays and lesbians—few pro clubs are making the effort to embrace gay fans and gay players.

In fact, the mainstream media frenzy over who *Out* magazine editor Brendan Lemon's gay east coast baseball-superstar boyfriend is ("Does he play for Boston, Montreal, Philly, Baltimore or New York?") proves MLB desperately needs a gay Jackie Robinson. "[The gay players] want the lucrative endorsements and contracts and don't want fans in the stands screaming at them the first time they go around the league," former umpire Dave Pallone—railroaded out of pro baseball in 1988 because he's gay, and who says he can still name an all-gay All-Star team—told me just this past spring. "But after that I think it would go away. I think ultimately the fans will remain fans."

Which reminds me of the time when members of ACT-UP Montreal—led by 10-foot-tall black drag queen Mochasheena—marched through the stands handing out condoms at the Big O during an Expos match on St-Jean-Baptiste Day many years ago. They were about as well-received as the Canadian national anthem.

The old baseball anthem "Take Me Out to the Ball Game" (penned by Jack Norworth and Albert Von Tilzer in 1908) conjures up feelings of fraternity, a field of dreams where pride, love and joy overcome our differences. But the truth is, from the World Series to



Vladimir Guerrero

sandlot baseball, from Jackie Robinson to Glenn Burke, the foul lines have never protected us from bigots. But they should. And they could.

As Felipe Alou—fired as Expos skipper earlier this season—told me many years ago, there is no room for homophobia in baseball. "There are too many other things out there to worry about," he said. "Too many killings, too many robberies, too many lies."

Which is why, following baseball's 72nd All-Star game this week, and with the Expos' future up in the air, Alou's wisdom always makes me look forward to the seventh-inning stretch. ♦



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### Shelf Life

Continued from previous page

Encounters with Unethical, Unscrupulous, Unprincipled Political Journalists" and defines important spin doctoring terms like "ratfucking." Personally, I'd call that a hard-to-resist book.

### Mordecai, then and now

And the last word belongs to author Mordecai Richler, who passed away last week at the age of 70. Richler, the inestimable author of novels like *The*

**Gravity Pope**  
Roxy: 2 piece swim  
suit, Limbo sandal  
Model: Vina



## Maillot clinic

**Gravity Pope**  
Miss Sixty: denim top shorts  
Model: Mallory



**Gravity Pope**  
Diesel: 2 piece  
swimsuit  
Model: Vina



style

**Gravity Pope**  
Diesel: 2 piece swimsuit  
Bronti Bay: clutch bag  
Model: Mallory



Ignore the mags:  
there's no such thing  
as a "forbidden"  
swimsuit

BY JULIANN WILDING

After months of staring at beautiful but unbearable winter landscapes and eagerly dreaming of tearing off our sweaters and running half-naked through the nearest empty field, summer is finally here. The grass is green, the air is warm all day and night and clothing is little, thin and light.

Of course, it's also swimsuit season, a fact that, unfortunately, causes many people unnecessary stress and dread when they should be enjoying the availability of their own and others' bare flesh. Why does everyone hate buying swimsuits? Is it because the sudden barring of thighs and bums and tummies makes everyone feel dis-

orientated after a winter spent enveloped in countless layers of thick clothing? Or is it the flat-bodied mannequins that stare vacantly out from storefronts, dressed in the only swimsuits available and looking like no human ever could? (Or would want to, in my opinion.) Perhaps it's the models in fashion magazines, with their disdainful pouts, airbrushed stretch marks and toned bodies wearing swimsuits that no real woman could slip into and feel good in.

I was flipping through a well-known glossy American magazine recently when I came to the obligatory "How-to-Pick-a-Swimsuit" section. (I believe the feature was entitled "Swimsuits for Every Figure.") The feature was eight pages long, each page divided into a sort of grid displaying a photo of a different "in style" swimsuit. The sections were given headings such as: ample hips, short legs, full bottom, big tummy (I'm serious), small bust, big bust, thick torso—and on each

page, one section called "perfect ten" which featured a supermodel strutting in a designer swimsuit.

### "Ten" commandments

At first glance I started laughing at the absurdity of such a feature, but then I realized how serious it was. Each section would actually provide detailed instructions on how to tuck, cover, invent illusions and create a "strategy" to better masquerade your "unfavourable" body parts, while the "perfect ten" section gave cute, encouraging remarks such as "Shine on!", "Isn't it rich?" and "This will have them going in circles." (Need I add that the swimsuits in the "big tummy" sections were far more frumpy and tacky than the ones the perfect-ten girls got to wear?)

What frustrated me most about the feature was the knowledge that many women, both young and old, would pay attention to this kind of propaganda and come to believe that they can only wear swimsuits within a very limited range of styles

and shapes. These women, knowing that those particular brackets are for the "fat" or "unshapely" or "flawed" women, also begin to hate selecting and wearing swimsuits, or even start hating their own bodies. It's a disgusting and upsetting mindset, but one that the fashion industry propagates with every approaching summer. With every advert, magazine cover, window display and television show, women are made to feel not thin or toned or runway-model-like enough to even try on swimsuits.

### Body consciousness

Women's bodies—and I mean *real* women's bodies—are beautiful in their diversity, beautiful in their specific individuality, precisely because they are real and whole and natural. Women ought to be made to feel as though they can wear whatever and however many sorts of swimsuits they like; there's no such thing as a swimsuit you're not "allowed" to wear. Whatever became of the days when women could just throw on a bathing

suit when going to the beach or swimming pool and be comfortable and healthy in their lovely sunned skin no matter what their body type?

My advice to anyone choosing a swimsuit this year is that your body deserves the sun just as much as anyone else's does. Lounging around wearing little more than underwear is a delight no one should feel they cannot indulge in because they don't have "perfect ten" thighs or breasts (whatever *those* are). If you're going to buy a swimsuit, choose one because you like the way it looks, because it fits you, because it's well-made and durable and because it's reasonably priced for your budget. Buy a bathing suit because you want to wear it. That's all the decision should entail. ☺

Photos: Francis Tétrault

Assistant: Charis

Clothing: Gravity Pope, Etzio

Models: Mallory & Vina

Agency: Mode Models

Location: Somewhere near Chipman



## ECAs

Continued from page 4

Development (OECD) in Paris, ECA representatives from the 26 rich industrialized countries have been unsuccessfully attempting to agree on a set of common environmental approaches and guidelines for export finance.

At the 1999 meeting of the eight leading industrialized countries (G8) in Cologne, the G8 heads of state

committed to working towards common environmental guidelines for export finance within the OECD and to completing the task within two years. The ECA representatives will be meeting once again in Paris on June 7 and 8, but they are more deadlocked than ever on basic issues of granting public access to environmental information and common international environmental standards. Over the past 20 years, the agencies have managed to set detailed standards for interest rates and fees. Therefore,

there is no reason why they could not also agree to put an end to their reckless competition in financing social-ecological debacles.

The G8 is scheduled to meet in Genoa, Italy, this year on July 20. More pressure is needed from the U.S. and other major countries at the summit to break the OECD deadlock. Indeed, this is one international environmental issue on which the United States has exercised and can continue to exercise notable international leadership. Since the mid-1990s, the U.S.

Export-Import Bank has had environmental procedures in place that ensure some degree of transparency and high international environmental standards for its projects. By supporting common environmental standards for export finance, President Bush could gain much needed credibility in the wake of his decision to renege on the Kyoto Protocol.

One of the results of the anti-globalization protests in Seattle, Prague and Quebec is that governments and international organiza-

tions have realized the need for more transparency and collaboration with environmental groups and trade unions. But many ECAs are still far from such an understanding. Around the world, a growing number of environmental, development, church and human rights groups want their message to be heard: the lack of common environmental and social standards for export credit agencies has led to a misuse of public resources and has undermined the long-term interests of everyone on this planet. ☀

## MacEwan Launches Innovative Certificate in Emergency Communications

Emergency dispatchers have come a long way since the 1970s, when television programs first glamorized the rescue and response field. Through the introduction of 9-1-1, to the amalgamation of emergency services, the field has followed a natural evolution that parallels the rise of satellite, computer, and telecommunications. As the field has become more specialized, employers are looking to highly trained professionals to answer the call. Career opportunities abound for professionals with the skills to operate highly specialized call centers dealing with high priority service requests.

The last ten years have seen a dramatic rise in technology that has resulted in exciting career opportunities for Emergency Communications Officers who are well-trained in advanced radio, telecommunications, and Computer Assisted Dispatch technologies. The Emergency Communications Officer is responsible for the evaluation of all service requests and emergency calls, coordinating the active response of fire, police, and ambulance services to protect the public from danger. Interpersonal skills, stress management, and a level head under pressure are key to success in this dynamic field.

Doug Johnson, Acting Training Officer for the City of Edmonton's Emergency Response Department Communications Centre, is watching MacEwan's program with much interest. With nearly 30 years in the business, doing everything from driving ambulances to working as a paramedic, Johnson knows what it takes to be successful in the field.

"Edmonton Emergency Response supports any education or training initiative that will increase an individual's knowledge and job performance in this fast-paced environment," says

Johnson, "There is a high demand for emergency communications professionals, and the more training you have, the better your chances of being successful."

Due to a lack of educational programs in Canada, many employers must train new officers themselves, draining valuable time and resources. Grant MacEwan College's new eight-month certificate in Emergency Communications & Response meets this challenge head on, providing practical training for individuals interested in a telecommunications career. MacEwan's field placement course situates students in real work environments so that students know exactly what to expect after graduation.

"We've developed a very professional program," says Sharon Hobden, Program Coordinator at MacEwan, "In collaboration with leaders from the emergency field and using our expertise in existing programming such as Grant MacEwan's Police Studies Program, we've put together a program that combines theory and practice in a way which gives students every chance for success."

"Understanding the environment you're about to enter is absolutely critical - it's very emotionally demanding and stressful, and it requires a high level of knowledge to fully utilize sophisticated equipment," says Johnson, "In the end, the high-tech equipment is just a tool to allow you to help someone in trouble, maybe even save his or her life."

Find out more about MacEwan's certificate in Emergency Communications & Response. Attend a free info session on July 18, 2001 at 6:30 p.m. in Room 7-333, City Centre Campus. For more details call Sharon at 497-5181, or email [hobdens@admin.gmcc.ab.ca](mailto:hobdens@admin.gmcc.ab.ca)



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Your Future  
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# Between a Rooke and a hard place

*Painting the Dog* reveals Leon Rooke's mastery of tone, character, voice

BY JOSEF BRAUN

"There are pretty pictures and not-so-pretty pictures," explains the narrator of Leon Rooke's story "Pretty Pictures." The narrator is a man who sees a picture in his mind of himself sitting atop his father's shoulders as a small child, of eating an ice cream cone and watching it drip into his father's hair. This is a pretty picture. But the picture that immediately follows is one of his father asking, "Where do you want to go next?"—and this picture isn't so pretty. The child doesn't know where he wants to go, he's panicking, and this picture that stays inside the man's mind is the last—and the only—picture he has of his father.

"Pretty Pictures" is the final story in the new collection *Painting the Dog*, a marvelous, elegantly selected and sequenced collection of 17 stories culled from Leon Rooke's 30-year career. And the characters in these stories offer a plethora of pictures pretty, but more often not-so-pretty. Rooke's

characters frequently don't know where they want to go or even where they're able to go. These are couples without children, children without fathers, women without a means of escape (or women who discover those means through the most sinister of actions). Rooke writes about families, groups of people trying to become families or people who long to find family—anything to ward off the helpless feeling of abandonment that always threatens to engulf you when you come to realize you're alone in the world.

Yet *Painting the Dog* also reveals a deeper optimism beneath the boredom, frustration and helplessness of these characters' lives. Rooke shows people whose lives can be altered or even saved by the subtlest forms of magic (a couple living in the country receives a gift of perfect white cloth simply because they have suffered and they have loved) or a last-minute decision to include someone on a journey (a man who finds himself devoid of all feeling suddenly decides to escape out a window with the daughter whose name he can't even remember hanging onto his back). Rooke has a strange, empathetic talent for seeking out characters with peculiar and often disturbing perspectives, and, without judgment, writing their stories

with them as the storyteller, giving them a voice, perhaps some hope and, always, some dignity. It's his talent for finding that perfect individual voice that makes these stories so deeply affecting, so funny and so convincing, even in the oddest contexts.

## The "Saks" was amazing

In "Saks Fifth Avenue," a man named Cecil describes his quiet life with his wife Coolie, a woman whose careless insults seem as devoid of charm or kindness as one can imagine. Yet Cecil absorbs everything his wife says as though it were simply the most playful and affectionate expressions of the human soul imaginable. ("I find nothing in life so buoyant as her abuse," Cecil says.) But he wonders about the box where they keep the shoe polish, the box that says Saks Fifth Avenue, and wonders if his wife has a life he knows nothing about; and he dreams of the children they might have shared and might have made their lives the opposite of what they are now. As with most of the stories in *Painting the Dog*, I can't count the times I laughed out loud reading "Saks Fifth Avenue," but I'm equally at a loss to describe the almost clandestine way in which it touched me.

Although he's lived much of his life in Canada, Rooke was born in

North Carolina, and the landscape of Rooke's stories seems informed by the same settings as those of other writers of the American South such as Carson McCullers and Flannery O'Connor (and with his giant shadow looming over the world of contemporary American short fiction, it would be hard not to draw parallels between Rooke's low-rent, dysfunctional types with those of Raymond Carver's). But Rooke injects an odd jolt of the surreal into his work—goofy bursts of strangeness that reincarnate Gogol as a minimalist—that always heads straight for the heart and causes his stories to take wild turns into an unexpected truth that stays adrift in one's mind long after the story is finished. ☀

# Painting the Dog

The Best Stories of

# Leon Rooke

"Leon Rooke is a North American treasure."

— Russell Banks

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AS SEEN BY



du Maurier ARTS



# Ice cream frenzy along Whyte Avenue!

Vue's food expert gorges himself on four helpings of the cold stuff

BY DAVID DICENZO

What a pisser. I'm watching the 6 p.m. news on Tuesday, and a local TV lass named Tiffany starts her segment about combating the summer heat by talking to all these folks on Whyte Ave about the yummy ice cream in their hands. About 90 minutes before, I was one of 'em, taking an icy tour with my buddy Colin, which saw me eat scoops at four different places. The goal was actually to attend five joints, but my stomach called it quits after my fourth bowl in about 45 minutes.

Tiffany's right—it's hot. And when it's hot, ice cream is awesome. Hell, it's awesome any time. I'm sure the doctor will wanna know why my blood is so creamy, but I thought making some quality and price comparisons would be a good idea. We

## gluttony

started at that little Italian café **La Piazza**, where I ordered the papaya sorbetto (\$2.75 for one scoop in a bowl), though the white chocolate raspberry was callin' my name. According to the literature at the counter, their ice cream has 25 per cent less air and low butterfat, (and in fact, the sorbets have zero fat, while the gelati have six per cent). I dug the papaya. It was really light, but to be honest, I had just brushed my teeth 10 minutes before so I had that toothpaste film thing going on, denying me all the available flavour.

On to the next stop: **Block 1912**. Colin, who had passed at La Piazza, chose something called vaniglia bean from the selection of 30 varieties, and I jumped at the sweet-looking tiramisu. "I have a feeling it's gonna taste like vanilla," he wryly says. And after one mouthful? "Yup, vanilla." Funny. My tiramisu was perfect, and there were really good chunks of the dessert mixed into the ice cream. You could actually taste the creamy custard made with the mascarpone cheese. Though I was thoroughly impressed, each scoop was about four bucks

(more when you include tips for the cuties dishing it out).

### Alphabet Scoop

A few blocks down the road is **What's the Scoop?**, one of the largest ice cream retailers in the world. The list of choices was about 50 items long, including some yogurts and shakes. Colin went with the chocolate peanut butter and I was content with banana chocolate fudge. He wanted "veins" of peanut butter throughout, but it was predominantly chocolate with the odd chunk of P.B. and Reese's Pieces. Mine was similar in that the scoop was mostly banana with one clump of fudge. Still, each was tasty enough (it is ice cream, after all) and it was a big, dense portion for only \$2.35 a piece. The owner was super nice too, so I didn't bug him about the spelling of the "expresso fudge."

Next on the tour was **Ber Zerk**, and needless to say, I was fillin' up. Colin was ready for an old-school black cherry. Mine was, well, berserk. Love Potion #31 contained vanilla with chocolate pieces, black raspberry and the topper, chocolate hearts (and lots of 'em) filled with a

raspberry spurt (\$2.75 for a huge serving). "They went above and beyond," Colin summates. Damn right, but man, was it sweet. I've often said that there's no such thing as "too sweet," but I had never downed three different bowls prior to uttering the phrase.

I was done.

### Zerk, not Turk

We were supposed to stop at **Carol's Quality Sweets** or **Turkish Donair and Kabob**—where we joked about the fictitious crab or falafel-flavoured ice cream—but I couldn't do it. The high concentration of chocolate in the last sample simply pushed me over the edge. Besides, if I want more ice cream, I can stay put at home. About four months ago, the gal and I picked up a nice ice cream maker for only \$45. Here's another pisser: a few weeks later, I saw it on sale somewhere for \$30. That's 15 bucks' worth of ingredients for my awaiting machine. Damn. As for the winner on the tour, it had to be **Ber Zerk**. Party in yer mouth, big portions and a cheap price. What more could you ask for?

Other than two scoops. ☺

## DISHWEEKLY

Continued from previous page

**Billiards Club** (211, 10505-82 Ave., 432-0335) Rack 'em up and chow down, with heaps of burgers, \$1 mugs of ale, \$.

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**Larry's Café** (6, 10015-82 Ave., 414-6040) Best breakfasts and lunches on the south side. Cheap prices! Open till 3:30 p.m. daily. \$

**Louie's Submarine** (8109-104 St., 431-0897) Indoor fresh bread baked. Soups and salads. Catering business and social lunches or dinners. \$

**Nellie's Tea Shoppe** (12606-118 Ave., 452-9429) Home-made meals. Specializing in traditional English high tea and gourmet evening meals. Open till 9 p.m. \$

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**Rosie's Bar and Grill** (10604-101 St., 423-3499) Nothing fancy, but sensible home cooking without the frills. Non-smoking restaurant with smoking lounge. \$

**Sheeky's** (7623 Argyll Rd., 426-8983, #100, 10130-103 St., 424-8657) Real food, real fast. Terrific Italian Dishes. Soups/salads/sandwiches made from scratch. Call ahead for reservations.

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**DISHWEEKLY**

Continued from previous page

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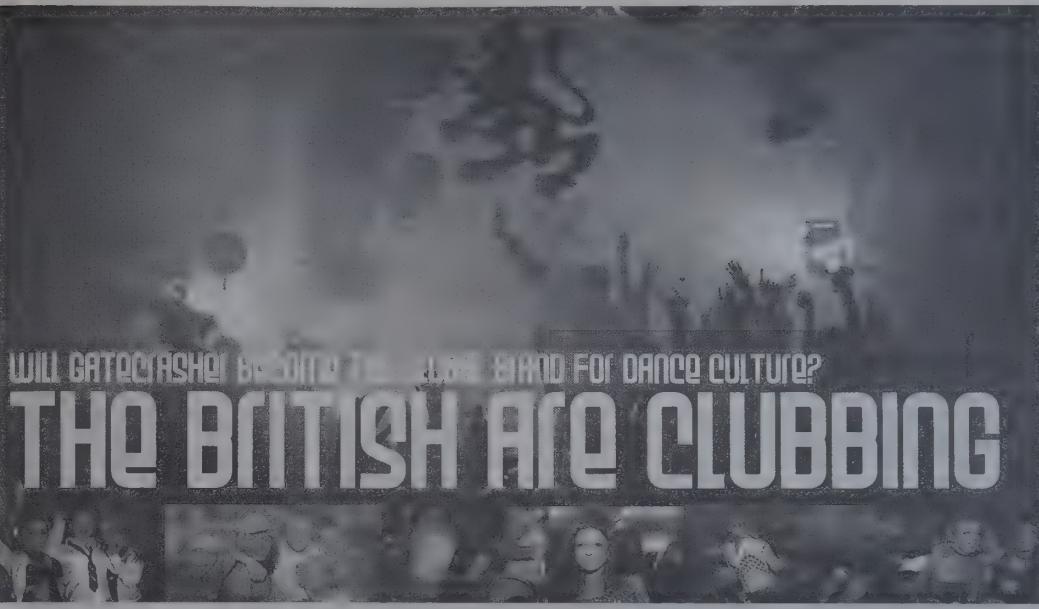
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WILL GATECRASHER BECOME THE NEW BRAND FOR DANCE CULTURE?

# THE BRITISH ARE CLUBBING

BY DAVE JOHNSTON

**A** century ago, Britain was the nation that ventured out and essentially defined the Western world. They exchanged the wealth of the new frontiers for their customs and political systems, eventually wielding a considerable amount of power over a good part of the globe.

Simon Raine doesn't sound like he's leading an army into the New World, but his ambition is equal to that of the great capitalists of yore. Just as Richard Branson was instrumental in creating the idea of brand synergy with his Virgin empire in the 20th century, Raine seems eager to bring 21st-century British club culture to North America and beyond.

"Eventually," he says, "when people think of dance music, I want them to think of Gatecrasher."

Gatecrasher is Raine's creation, a superclub that has become a legendary institution in Britain. Since it was born in 1993 as a one-off event in the northern city of Sheffield, Gatecrasher has evolved into an influential barometer of global dance culture, setting trends that cities the world over follow. Like its contemporaries—Ministry of Sound, Cream, Godskitchen and Slinky—Gatecrasher has become a brand name that characterizes progressive electronic culture, from its stylish advertising campaigns to its embrace of the Internet's multimedia abilities. Going to Gatecrasher means more than going out for a night of dancing—it's an experience.

Canadian DJ and Juno-nominated producer Max Graham recently earned the vaunted title of resident spinner at the club after impressing Raine and the rest of the club's staff with his stomping progressive house sound. Graham sees Gatecrasher as "90 per cent lead and 10 per cent follow" in comparison to other clubs in

the world. "They're leaders in their genre," says Graham. "They've recognized the shifts and they're ahead of the game, deciding before the industry the direction to go toward."

## I come from a club down under

The direction Raine has decided to take Gatecrasher is overseas, to North America. The club has already made an impact in places like Australia, where he founded a joint venture with investors down under to sell the club's noted mixed compilation CDs and merchandise, as well as establish the name on the country's entertainment industry. Raine feels that North America is the next step for his club brand.

"It's the next place where dance music is going to explode," he says. "If that's going to take place, then we want to be at the forefront of it."

Since last year, the club has been touring the continent with a portable version of the Sheffield institution featuring a laser show, multimedia projections, computerized lighting and DJs from both sides of the Atlantic. This year's version is led by British DJs Jon Pleased Wimmin and Stuart Rowell, as well as leading American trance jockey Sandra Collins—an important choice to make, according to Raine. "If we're going to develop a brand in North America, we need to develop relationships with North American DJs who are in touch with what's happening there," he says. "We're not one of these brands coming over and saying, 'Move aside, we'll show you how it's done.' We want to fit in and be a part of the industry there. Besides, there's a lot of good English DJs, but there's an awful lot of North American DJs who are excellent, so we want to use them."

Raine's strategy involves a lot of hard work and co-operation with the communities where the Gatecrasher

tour lands. While other British clubs are attempting to seduce clubbers with big marquee names, Raine says that he'd prefer to use the Gatecrasher brand philosophy to win over the crowds. "Any brand that moves to North America with a huge artist line-up isn't really attracting people because they're a brand," he reasons. "They're not connecting with anybody—Gatecrasher has always been about connecting with people. The most important people at Gatecrasher are the audience, because they help create the atmosphere that builds the club. Our plan for North America is to recreate that on a larger scale. We'd prefer to build it up and create partnerships, rather than barge in with a huge talent bill."

Turning Gatecrasher into a global brand name is a natural response to how dance music has circled the globe. He points to a recent night at the Sheffield club, where DJs from Germany, Holland and Japan entertained patrons through the night. "There isn't a night that goes by that an international DJ isn't playing," he says. "Gatecrasher may have started as a British club, but it's a part of dance music now. Dance music isn't a British-led thing anymore. The fact that we've got foreign DJs every week changed things [for the club]. The Internet has also made things global—we weekly Web broadcasts have made the club a completely different experience for the rest of the world. It's already the number one night-club brand in Australia, and we're hoping that we can do the same in North America."

## Moonshine superman

According to Steven Levy, clubs like Gatecrasher may have their work cut out for them. Over the past 10 years, the London, England native has taken his Los Angeles-based club promotions company Moonshine and turned it into arguably the most successful electronic music brand in

North America. "I'm the English guy who already did it when no one noticed," he laughs.

Like Gatecrasher, Moonshine evolved into a brand name in a natural fashion—first clubs, then a record label and now a brand name for tours and merchandise. "We've got 10 years of branding Moonshine the label, and something like Gatecrasher or Cream can't walk in and expect to take over," Levy says.

Levy says he's had a number of conversations with promoters and individuals in various American cities who feel that the British clubs might meet a lot of resistance from the North American industry. "[American promoters] think it's a joke," he says. "Yeah, these clubs are going to come in and spend some money, but you can't buy 10 years' worth of branding."

Levy refers to an established Los Angeles promotions company, Insomnia, who have spent years building their name to the point where they can sell 30,000 tickets to a single event.

"They've been doing it since 1993," he says, "and they've pulled in thousands for their first two events this year. That's taken years to build up. The British clubs did the same thing in England—they grew from being just small happenings with 200 people attending, and they've forgotten about that. America is such a huge country, so how are they going to do it?"

He continues. "It's much easier to do their business in England, because you've got access to 30 million people within 25 miles of the centre of London. You can reach the whole population with one TV show or one radio station. You can't do that here—there's 157 markets in America alone, with six radio stations and 25 television stations reaching each one. You can't buy it. This is the frustration we're faced with when we're trying to break records. If you can't break one record, then how can you

break a whole brand?"

## The British are clubbing! The British are clubbing!

Levy credits brands like Gatecrasher with making the attempt to play a part in North America's dance music explosion. "There's a place for everyone here, as long as they contribute to what we're doing. But I'm sensing that they will still encounter some hostility from some of the players in the industry," Levy feels that British clubs have set their sights on North America is because there's no room left to grow back home. "It's been oversaturated, and they view North America as the next great frontier," he says. "I think there's room for the U.K. talent, but these British clubs have built a place for themselves back home, and if they're going to make it, they need to build it from the ground up."

Raine understands that turning Gatecrasher into a household name won't happen overnight. "I don't think we can presume that we're going to come over and expect to succeed right away," he says. "There's going to be some slip-ups along the way, surely. I know some clubs go to other territories and expect to find the limousines waiting for them. North America is a big place, and you'd have to be pretty huge to make an impact, so I think there's some respect in going out and doing it, but we can only hope that the shows are good and reasonably full. We've got really good partners out there, and they can only add to the success of the nights. We're carefully picking and choosing who we work with."

Gatecrasher has already established a beachhead in New York City, where they host a monthly residency at the infamous Limelight club. "Our fanbase is so strong there that if we were to put out a flyer, several thousand people will be lined up the door on our night," Raine says of Gatecrasher's impact on the American metropolis. "People know that the music will be good and that the production will be good—and I know that the people inside will be the sort of people I want to mix with."

## Oakey-dockey

Raine also recognizes that the impact British DJs like Paul Oakenfold, Sasha and John Digweed have already made on North America has played an important role in Gatecrasher's global aspirations. "I think that's significant for everyone in dance music," Raine states. "It's a bigger statement than just Gatecrasher. I think they've pushed forward and flown the flag for British dance music, which makes it easier for people like us to follow."

Taking Gatecrasher out on the road means more than making a fast buck in the New World, Raine feels. He believes in the music and the fact that Gatecrasher has a lot to contribute to what is quickly becoming a culture that no one country can lay claim to.

"It's more than just taking some DJs and some lights out on the road," Raine says. "It's about an attitude."

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## MUSICNOTES

BY WAYNE ARTHURSON

### Hard rock: cure for cancer?

**Breast Cancer Fundraiser • Rev Cabaret • Fri, July 13** Be honest with yourself. If you were asked to create a musical lineup for a Breast Cancer Fundraiser, you probably wouldn't think of bands like Broken Nose, Lure, Mammoth, Curbstomp, and Impaired. But those are precisely the bands playing the first annual Breast Cancer Fundraiser show this Friday at the Rev Cabaret. Promoter Jennifer Bunch of Jenuwine Productions says that the mostly male talent performing at the show just proves how much an effect breast cancer has on all of us.

"I don't think there's anyone who hasn't been affected—through a mother, wife, girlfriend or someone they know—by breast cancer," says Bunch, who also works as a holistic health practitioner and deals with many breast cancer patients. "A lot of the research into breast cancer is holistic and I've been introduced to breast cancer by having to deal with people at work, and also having it happen to someone I care



## Mammooth

for very deeply." Bunch's boyfriend Rob Banks's mother is a survivor of the disease—and since Banks is also a member of Mammoth, the fundraiser's genesis is a little easier to understand.

Once Mammoth signed up for the show, the other bands (some of Bunch's favourite local groups) fell in quite easily. Every band is donating their time for the show. Even the Canadian Breast Cancer Foundation, who will be the recipient of the show's proceeds, are highly supportive of the event and will make information about breast cancer (as well as those little pink ribbons) available at the show.

Most of the Foundation's fundraising activities, such as the Run for the Cure, are targeted at an older, female

audience, and they saw this show as a way of reaching a younger age group—and hopefully the event will be repeated in years to come. "We're looking at doing a festival for next year," says Bunch. "Maybe we'll throw in some alternative country bands during the day and have it progressively get harder as the night wears on. And then maybe have a different space for DJs so we can hit a wider audience."

So if you like your music loud—and I know there's a lot of you who do—and you wouldn't mind helping out a good cause at the same time, check out the show. There will also be prizes, including skateboards and gift certificates for tattoos, up for grabs. Doors are at 8 and it's an eight-buck cover.

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**who's playing where and when this week**

### Thursday

July 12—Maurice John Vaughn at Blues on Whyte • Gord Matthews Band at Capitol Hill Pub • Catalyst at Casino Yellowhead • Stephanie Thomson at Cook County Saloon • King Muskata at Druid • Craig Giaocobbe Trio at Four Rooms Restaurant • Final Offence at King's Knight Pub • Todd Reynolds at Lion's Head Pub • Larry Berrio at Lion's Head Pub • Larry Berrio at Longrider's Saloon • Elevator, Litterbug, Man-At-Arms at New City Likwid Lounge • Magnificent Charlie at O'Byrne's • Sandra Collins, Jon Pleasen Wimmin, Stuart Powell at Red's • Broken Nose, Lure, Mammoth, Curbstomp, Impaired at Red's • Face First at Rock Central Station • Tim Becker at Sherlock Holmes Capilano • Dave Hiebert at Sherlock Holmes Downtown • Duff Robison at Sherlock Holmes on Whyte • Sam August at Sherlock Holmes WEM • Coldspot at Sidertrack Café • Bill Jamieson at Tin Pan Alley • Mustard Smile at Urban Lounge

### Friday

July 13—Kevin Ryan at Atlantic Trap and Gill • Maurice John Vaughn at Blues on Whyte • Gord Matthews Band at Capitol Hill Pub • The Ramblers at Casino Edmonton • Catalyst at Casino Yellowhead • Brian Gregg, Patsy Amico at Expressions Café • Jerry Dubyk Trio at Four Rooms Restaurant • Black Mall at HorseShoe Cocktail Club • E.M.D. at J.J.'s Pub • O-

Town, Wave at Jubilee Auditorium • Rhythm Slave at King's Knight Pub • Todd Reynolds at Lion's Head Pub • Larry Berrio at Longrider's Saloon • Rayovac, Parkade, Whitey Houston at New City Likwid Lounge • Magnificent Charlie at O'Byrne's • Duff Robison at Red's • Face First at Rock Central Station • Tim Becker at Sherlock Holmes Capilano • Dave Hiebert at Sherlock Holmes Downtown • Duff Robison at Sherlock Holmes on Whyte • Sam August at Sherlock Holmes WEM • Prairie Oyster at Sidertrack Café • Mr. Lucky at Sportsman's Pub • Mike McDonald at Sugarbowl Café (University) • Rick Garvin at Tim's Grill • Mollys Reach, Woodabeen at Sherlock Holmes on Whyte • Sam August at Tim's Grill • Mustard Smile at Urban Lounge

### Saturday

July 14—Kevin Ryan at Atlantic Trap and Gill • Mike McDonald, Ben Spencer at Black Dog • Maurice John Vaughn at Blues on Whyte • Gord Matthews Band at Capitol Hill Pub • The Ramblers at Casino Edmonton • Catalyst at Casino Yellowhead • Don Berner Trio at Four Rooms Restaurant • Black Mall at HorseShoe Cocktail Club • Rhythm Slave at King's Knight Pub

Steve Lorette at Library • Todd Reynolds at Lion's Head Pub • Larry Berrio at Longrider's Saloon • Rayovac, Parkade, Whitey Houston at New City Likwid Lounge • Finger Eleven, Clutch, Unfertilized Theory, Blinkin' and the Star at Shaw Conference Centre • Tim Becker at Sherlock Holmes Capilano • Dave Hiebert at Sherlock Holmes Downtown • Duff Robison at Sherlock Holmes on Whyte • Sam August at Sherlock Holmes WEM • Shakin' Not Stirred at Sidertrack Café • Willie and the Haymakers at Sportsman's Pub • Phork, Timeless at Stars • The Nomads at Tin Pan Alley • Mustard Smile at Urban Lounge

### Sunday

July 15—My Huge Ass at Sidertrack Café

### Monday

July 16—The Corn Sisters at Black Dog • Little Mike and the Tornados at Blues on Whyte • Michelle Raye at Lion's Head Pub • Recipe From a Small Planet at Sidertrack Café

### Tuesday

July 17—Little Mike and the Tornados at Blues on Whyte • Ben Harrat at Donna • Dr. Hook at Joint • Michelle Raye at Lion's Head Pub • Steve

Palmer, Western Union at Longrider's Saloon • The Rockin' Mexicans, Jallouse Rob, Grampy's New City Likwid Lounge • Finger Eleven, Clutch, Unfertilized Theory, Blinkin' and the Star at Shaw Conference Centre • Tim Becker at Sherlock Holmes Capilano • Dave Hiebert at Sherlock Holmes Downtown • Duff Robison at Sherlock Holmes on Whyte • Sam August at Sherlock Holmes WEM • Shakin' Not Stirred at Sidertrack Café • Willie and the Haymakers at Sportsman's Pub • Phork, Timeless at Stars • The Nomads at Tin Pan Alley • Mustard Smile at Urban Lounge

### Wednesday

July 18—Little Mike and the Tornados at Blues on Whyte • Anna Beaumont at Festival Place • Michelle Raye at Lion's Head Pub • Yellowbelly at Sidertrack Café • 90 Pound Head, The Peanut Man at Urban Lounge

### Thursday

July 19—Little Mike and the Tornados at Blues on Whyte • Lisa Hewitt at Casino Yellowhead • Suga Kane at Drud • Bill Jamieson Trio at Four Rooms Restaurant • Michelle Raye at Lion's Head Pub • Damien Marshall at Longrider's Saloon • Septimus, Orange, 12 Angry Fish at Rev • Ben Sures at Rose Bowl Pizza • Andy White, Gnu and the Ragtime Millionaires at Sidertrack Café • Rhonda Withnell at Tin Pan Alley • Syndicate at Urban Lounge



Anna Beaumont

### Annie, champion of the World's

**Anna Beaumont • Festival Place • Wed, July 18** Also on the topic of breast cancer, Anna Beaumont will bring her sultry and silky vocal stylings to Festival Place in Sherwood Park this Wednesday at 7:30 p.m. Beaumont will perform her song "Go for the World's" at the track and field event this August—and another one of her songs, "Ribbon of Light," will soon be adopted as the official theme song for the Breast Cancer Foundation.

Beaumont has developed a unique style that combines the worlds of jazz, pop and folk. She has performed locally and internationally with such musicians as P.J. Perry, Alfie Zappacosta, George Blondheim and Mary Wilson of the Supremes. Tickets for the Wednesday Night Patio Series are \$5 and are available only through the Festival Place box office at 449-FEST (3378).

### 11 will get you 15

**Catch and Release Party • New City Likwid Lounge • Sat, July 14** Even though the Catch and Release recording collective is based in Calgary, it seemed natural to include some Edmonton bands in their newest compilation disc, *11 Objects Lost and Found*. "It started out as a idea to get some of Calgary's best yet lesser-known indie-rock or art-rock-type bands," says Catch and Release's Ian Russell. "And we decided to get Edmontonian involvement as well. The scenes are so interconnected that it just seemed right to have Edmonton bands."

Despite the title, there are more than 16 songs on the disc from five

bands: Shelly Formé, Laura Palmer and Rayovaq out of Calgary, and Whitey Houston and Parkade from Edmonton. It's an eclectic mix of sounds, with the groove-math psychedelia of Parkade leading into the calm ambient sounds of Laura Palmer before exploding with the raunchy rock of Whitey Houston.

"We were trying to go for a more cohesive sound in the album but we ended up with making one of the most disparate-sounding albums around," says Russell. "It

wasn't that much of a surprise to a certain degree because the bands were given such creative control. It's their forum to do what they want and we dictated almost nothing in terms what was accomplished in the end."

*11 Objects Lost and Found* will be



officially released in Edmonton Saturday, July 14 with a show at the New City Likwid Lounge. Rayovaq will be headlining with Whitey Houston and Parkade offering support. Naturally, copies of the disc will be available for purchase.

Meanwhile, Catch and Release promises to keep Edmonton in its sights. Russell says they look at Alberta as one giant scene instead of two or more smaller ones. This September, for instance, they will be releasing a compilation of Calgary dirty rock bands called the *Southern Invasion*. To coincide with that, they want to release an Edmonton version called *Northern Retaliation*. Les Tabernacles have been mentioned as one of the

groups slated for the disc. "This will be all rock bands, totally straight-ahead rock bands, four-on-the-floor '70s-style rock," says Russell.

If you want to get info on the *Northern Retaliation* release or submit music, check out the Catch and Release website at [www.catch-and-release.org](http://www.catch-and-release.org) or write to #210, 2137-37 Avenue SW, Calgary, AB.

### Orange is not the only group

**Orange • Rev Cabaret • Thu, July 19** Musician Jim Gregory admits life can be a frustrating experience. Although he won't go into details, Gregory says that his band's music, which deals with issues of abuse and addiction, does have some personal connection to his life—all of which also led to his naming his band Orange, after the colour of frustration.

The frustration must be lessening in Gregory's life because he'll be officially announcing a name change at Orange's July 19 show at the Rev.

**Thur  
July  
12**

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**Fri  
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# MUSICWEEKLY

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Deadline is 3pm Friday.

Turn to "More Music" on page 20 for day-to-day listings.

## ALTERNATIVE

### NEW CITY LIKWID LOUNGE

10161/57-112 Street, 413-4578. FRI 13: Elevator, Litterbug, Man-At-Arms. SAT 14: Rayovac, Parkade, Whitey Houston, 11 Objects compilation CD release show. TUE 17: The Rockin' Mexicans, Jailhouse Rob and Grampa. FRI 20: Presented by Rock on Revolution: Full Flex, Occidents, Fourthworld Occupation, DJ Shortfuse, Open MC competition at 9pm. THU 26: Reverend Horton Heat, Bare Jr. SAT 21: Soul Shakedown Party: Mick Sleeter. CJSE FM88 Fundraiser.

**REV** 10030-102 Street, 424-2851. THU 12 (9:30 door): Greg McPherson Band (Winnipeg), Ben Sures Band. TIX: \$6. FRI 13 (8pm door): Broken Nose, Lure, Mammoth, Curbstomp, Impaired. Fundraiser for Canadian Breast Cancer Foundation and WIN House. TIX: \$8. SAT 14: Deko-ze. THU 19: Septimus, Orange, 12 Angry Fish. TIX: \$6. FRI 20: MI5, Supergarage, Northern Star. TIX: \$6. FRI 27: Texas Blood Money, New Nation, Indy Nosebone (Winnipeg). TIX: \$6.

### BLUES AND ROOTS

THE ATLANTIC TRAP AND GILL

7704 Calgary Trail South, 432-4611. THU 12: Open mic. FRI 13-SAT 14: Kevin Ryan.

### THE BLACK DOG FREEHOUSE

10425 Whyte Avenue, 439-1082. •Every SAT (3-6pm): Hair of the Dog. No cover. SAT 14 (3-6pm): Mike McDonald, Ben Spencer. MON 16: The Corin Sisters. (Neko Case and Carolyn Mark).

### BLUES AT THE HILL CAPITOL

HILL PUB 14203 Stony Plain Road, 454-3063. THU 12-SAT 14: Gord Mathewson Band.

**BLUES ON WHYTE** Commercial Hotel, 10329 Whyte Avenue, 439-5058. THU 12-SAT 14: Maurice John Vaughn. MON 16-SAT 21: Little Mike and the Tornados. MON 23-SAT 28: James Rodgers.

### CENTURY GRILL

3975 Calgary Trail South, 909-7800. •Every SAT (9pm): Rimshot (jazz, R&B). No cover.

**THE DRUID** 11606 Jasper Avenue, 454-9928. THU 12: King Muskata. TUE 17: Chris Wynters open stage with guest Rachelle van Zanten. THU 19: Suga Kane.

**EXPRESSIONZ CAFÉ, MARKET AND MEETING PLACE** 9142-118 Avenue, 471-9125. FRI 13: Brian Gregg and Patsy Amico. SAT 14: Open Stage with Randall Walsh. FRI 20: Stevie Ray Johnson. SAT 21: Open Stage with Randall Walsh.

**FESTIVAL PLACE** 100 Festival Way, Sherwood Park, 449-3378. •Every WED (Until Aug. 29): Wednesday Night Patio Series. WED

18 (7:30pm): Wednesday Night Patio Series: Anna Beaumont.

TIX: \$5. WED 25 (7:30pm): Wednesday Night Patio Series: Everett LaRoi. TIX: \$5.

### JUBILEE AUDITORIUM

451-8000. FRI 13: Town, Wave. TIX: \$27.50, \$35.50 @ TicketMaster.

**O'BYRNES** 10616 Whyte Avenue, 414-6766. FRI 13-SAT 14: Magnificent Charlie. FRI 20-SAT 21: Matthew's Grin.

### ROSEBOWL PIZZA AND LOUNGE

10111-117 Street, 482-5152. THU 12: Mike McDonald. THU 19: Ben Sures.

**RUMOURS PUB** 106, 9006-132 Avenue, 473-7410. FRI 20-SAT 21 (9pm-1:30am): The Shufflesounds.

### SIDETRACK CAFÉ

10333-112 Street, 421-1326. •Every SUN: Variety Night. THU 12 (9pm): Coldspot CD release party (3 singer/songwriters, rock). \$5 cover. FRI 13 (9pm): Prairie Oyster (country). TIX: \$15 adv. tickets @ the Sidetrack. SAT 14 (9pm): Shakin' Not Stirred. (classic '60s, '70s, '80s). \$8 cover. SUN 15 (8pm): My Huge Ass, Killer Comedy, DJ Dudeman. \$5 cover. MON 16 (9pm): Recipe From a Small Planet. \$5 cover. TUE

17 (9pm): Thirst n' Howl (party band). \$5 cover. WED 18 (9pm): Yellowbelly (world, pop, jazz, funk). \$5 cover. THU 19: (7:30): Early Show: Andy White (Irish pop singer/songwriter). (9:30): Late Show: Gnu and the Ragtime Millionaires (hip swing). (10:45): Interactive Jazz and Groove. TIX: \$5 early, \$5 late. FRI 20 (8pm door): Reach the Sky, Ensign, Compromise, Nevertheless. All ages

show. TIX: \$8/\$10. Adv. tickets @ the Sidetrack, Sonix, Freecloud, Blackbird, Myoozik, WEM Farside. SAT 21 (9pm): Long John Baldy (R&B). TIX: \$15 adv. tickets @ the Sidetrack. SUN 22 (8pm): Matthew's Grin, Killer Comedy, DJ Dudeman. \$5 cover. MON 23 (9pm): Crooked Creek (contemporary folk). \$5 cover. TUE 24 (9pm): Ashley Macisaac, Bobby Cameron. \$10/\$12. Adv. tickets @ the Sidetrack. WED 25 (9pm): Madhat (alt rock from Nova Scotia). \$5 cover.

### SUGARWOLF CAFÉ AND BAR

10922-88 Avenue, 433-8369. •Every FRI: Original live music. FRI 13: Mike McDonald. \$3 cover.

## CLASSICAL

**KINGS COLLEGE** 9125-50 Street, 450-2428. THU 12 (8pm): An Evening of Art Song: Robin Phillips (piano). \$10 @ door.

## COUNTRY

**COOK COUNTY SALOON** 8010-103 Street, 432-2665. THU 12: Stephanie Thomson. WED 25: Lace.

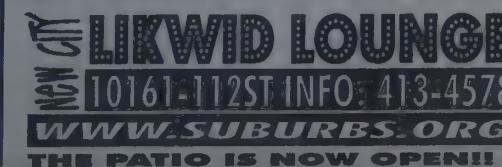
## JAZZ

### FOUR ROOMS RESTAURANT

102 Avenue entrance, Edmonton Centre, 426-4767. THU 12 (9pm): The Craig Giacobbo Trio. SAT 14 (9pm): The Don Berner Trio. THU 19 (9pm): The Bill Jamieson Trio. SAT 21 (9pm): The Brett Miles Trio.

**ZENARI'S ON 1ST** 10117-101

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In the words of "Kernel" Tom Holliston, the **Corn Sisters** are "a dynamic tour de force featuring the talents of two of the hardest working (and best-looking) ladies the North American West Coast has to offer." At least that's what Mint Records decided to post on their website. And yes, the dazzling duo of Neko Case and Carolyn Mark have never failed the likes of us ugly Edmontonians before, and it's always a pleasure when they saunter them overely selves into our neck of the woods. Pull up a chair, what might be a packed room over at the Black Dog, "tearhouse this Monday to bask in their magnificence. And they'll perform selections from their enormously entertaining disc *The Other Women*.

## MUSICWEEKLY

Continued from previous page

Street, 425-6151. FRI 13 (8-mid-night): Jerold Dubky Trio.

### PIANO BARS

**THE ELEPHANT AND CASTLE** 10314 Whyte Avenue, 439-4545. Every TUE: Open stage.

**THE LION'S HEAD PUB** Coast Terrace Inn, 4440 Calgary Trail South, 431-5815. THU 12-SAT 14: Todd Reynolds. MON 16-SAT 21: Michelle Raye.

**SHERLOCK HOLMES CAPILANO** Capilano Mall, 5004-98 Avenue, 463-7788. THU 12-SAT 14: Tim Becker.

**SHERLOCK HOLMES DOWN-TOWN** Rice Howard Way, 10012-101A Avenue, 426-7784. THU 12-SAT 14: Dave Hiebert.

**SHERLOCK HOLMES WEM** Bourbon Street, W.E.M., 444-1752. THU 12-SAT 14: Sam August.

**SHERLOCK HOLMES ON WHYTE** 10341-82 Avenue, 433-9676. Every SUN (9pm-1am): Karaoke. THU 12-SAT 14: Duff Robison.

### POP AND ROCK

Also see VURB Weekly on page 28.

**CASINO EDMONTON** 9055 Argyll Road, 463-9467. FRI 13-SAT 14: The Ramblers. FRI 19-SAT 20: Whiskey Junction.

**CASINO YELLOWHEAD** 12464-153 Street, 463-9467. THU 12-SAT 14: Catalyst. THU 19-SAT



### ROCK CENTRAL STATION

Kingsway Inn, 10812 Kingsway Avenue, 479-4266. FRI 13-SAT 14: Face First. FRI 20-SAT 21: Pleasure Pirates. SAT 21 (8pm door): CJSR FM 88/Mind Compression fundraiser. Lure, Texas Blood Money, Indian Police. TIX: \$5 @ door.

### SHAW CONFERENCE CENTRE

451-8000. TUE 17: All ages event. A Big Noise: Finger Eleven, Clutch, Unified Theory, Blinker the Star. TIX: \$27.50 @ TicketMaster.

### SPORTSMAN'S PUB

8170-50 Street, 469-3399. FRI 13: Mr. Lucky (blues, rockin' R&B). SAT 14: Willie and the Hay Makers.

**STARS** Upstairs, 10545 Whyte Avenue, 434-5366. SAT 14: Phork, Timeless. FRI 20: Celebration for the coming of Fear Factory. SAT 21: Johnny Fever (cover band).

**TIM'S GRILL** 7106-109 Street, 413-9606. Ben Hartt. CD release party. TIX: \$5 @ door.

**HORSESHU COCKTAIL CLUB** 12536-137 Avenue, 457-4000. FRI 13-SAT 14: Black Mail. FRI 20-SAT 21: Shakin' Not Stirred.

**J.J.'S PUB** 13160-118 Avenue, 451-9180. FRI 13: E.M.D.

**THE JOINT NIGHTCLUB** W.E.M., 8882-170 Street, 486-3013. TUE 17: Dr. Hook featuring Ray Sawyer.

**KINGSKNIGHT PUB** 9221-34 Avenue, 433-2599. THU 12: Final Offence. FRI 13-SAT 14: Rhythm Slave. FRI 20-SAT 21: Stiff.

**THE LIBRARY** 11113-87 Avenue, 430-4505. SAT 14: Steve Lorette (from Greyhound Tragedy).

**LONGRIDER'S SALOON** 11733-78 Street, 479-7400. THU 12-SAT 14: Larry Berrio. TUE 17: Steve Palmer and Western Union. WED 18: Battle of the bands, semifinals. THU 19: Damien Marshall (outdoor stage). FRI 20: Damien Marshall.

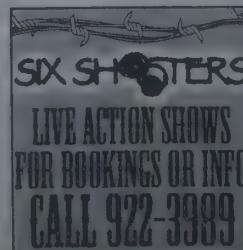
\$4 cover. SAT 21: Damien Marshall, Klondike Kate, Cabaret and fundraiser. \$4 cover. TUE 24: Circuit Rider. WED 25: Battle of the bands, semifinals.

### RED'S

WEM

487-2066, 451-8000.

FRI 13 (9pm): Gatecrasher: Sandra Collins, Jon Pleased Wimmin, Stuart Powell. TUE 24: Fear Factory, Puya, Primer 55, Dry Kill Logic.



### The

# SHERLOCK HOLMES

Pubs

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July 16-21: Tim Becker

### CAPILANO

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July 19-21: Sam August

### WHYTE AVE

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July 12-14: Duff Robison

July 18-21: Shane Young

### DOWNTOWN

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July 17-21: Chuck Belhumer

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# Todd Kerns gets Static from his brothers

Three siblings  
reinvent classic rock  
with Static in Stereo

BY DAVE JOHNSTON

Here's a cliché for you: they say that being in a rock band is sort of like being in a family. But Todd Kerns has taken that notion to the extreme.

Back in the day—sorry, another cliché—Todd and his brother John shared time in a band called Age of Electric with the Dahl brothers, Ryan and Kurt. Of course, like all great rock bands, they crumbled into dust. The Dahles plodded on with Limblifter, while the Kernses didn't.

Enter Static in Stereo. Todd and John dragged their third sibling

Ryan into the fray and began plowing their youthful memories of the days when rock was all about brotherhood. Those days of listening to Kiss tunes and fantasizing about stardom have given way to reality.

"It's not like the Osmonds or anything," laughs Todd over the phone from his parents' home in Saskatoon, where he's enjoying time away from the hustle of his adopted home of Vancouver. "I think we're more like a gang than a band."

Todd could have jumped back into the game soon after the breakup of Age of Electric in 1998, but instead he and his siblings began writing songs. They demoed

material in the studio of the Tea Party's Jeff Martin, and spent some time in New York, Los Angeles and Toronto. As their repertoire grew, Todd was thankful to be putting

some time and distance between himself and his former band.

"I wanted to wait until we had something that we felt good about," Todd says of the three-year hibernation until the release of Static's self-titled debut. "Starting over is starting over, and it's a bit easier once some of those ghosts have been exorcised. People remember the Age of Electric with a great deal of affection, but the way people talk about it, you'd think we achieved a lot more than we actually had. I mean, we did a lot for a bunch of guys from a small town out of nowhere. Any kind of success is attainable, but it's a matter of driving hard to the hoop."

## Some like it Mott

Static in Stereo is a case of starting over, but it's also a study in how rock's past can be reinterpreted for a new generation, without the

clichés. Much of the album takes its cue from bands like Kiss and Mott the Hoople, where riffs and singalong choruses run hand-in-hand through a landscape shadowed by glass towers.

"The exciting thing is that rock 'n' roll has been shoved into the underground," Todd says. "I notice it more now when we play out in the clubs. The mainstream is so prefabricated now that I think people have begun searching for the real stuff elsewhere. I also think we're facing a generation of kids who are not interested in running out and buying a Led Zeppelin record, because it's something Mom and Dad probably listened to."

Todd makes it clear that Static in Stereo isn't a clichéd retro act. The futuristic artwork that adorns the album, as well as the crisp production by former Odds member Steven Drake, clearly places the band's

vision of rock music in the new millennium. "We didn't want to get in there with computers and pitch-correct everything," Todd explains. "This is a straight-ahead rock 'n' roll record, but it's also forward-thinking. I'm not opposed to the digital tools available to us; I'm just opposed to taking someone off the street and making them sound good. It's disconcerting for someone who really works hard at being able to play and sing."

Forgive another cliché, but Todd's hard work is even more rewarding because his brothers are along for the ride. "All three of us have never been in a band together until now," he says. "The same reason we stood around playing air band as kids is the same reason we're playing together now. It's fun."

Static In Stereo

Stage 13, Camrose • Sat, July 14

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ENTERTAINMENT

# The Sugar-land express

Gordie Johnson asks *Brothers and Sisters, Are You Ready?*; is told yes

BY DAVE JOHNSTON

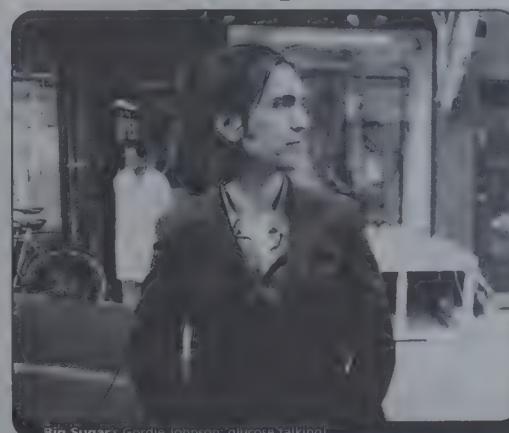
Gordie Johnson is what you might call an entertainer. Without a hint of irony, the frontman for Big Sugar takes particular delight in playing the part.

"It's like inviting some friends to your house after being at the bar all night," he laughs, "and you put on some records because you feel like they've gotta check them out. It's fun to be the host and blow everyone's mind with your cool record collection."

Ever since he first strolled out on a stage wearing one of his immaculate wool suits and carrying his guitar, Johnson and his group—guitarist Kelly Hoppe, drummer Al Cross, bassist Gary Lowe and new guitarist Mojah—have embodied the spirit of party music, where the crowd wrings every drop of sweat from your brow while the supernatural force of the groove takes over the stage.

"People depend on us to rock our faces off," Johnson chuckles. "It's fun to be able to go out and do acoustic shows or remix stuff in a reggae style, but it's all just to keep us interested in what we do. If Big Sugar were to put out a country record, though, people would probably shake their heads. I want them to put our records on in the car and crank it. I want it to kick the party into high gear—that's our job description."

For that reason, the latest disc from Big Sugar sounds more like a dare than an invitation to dance. *Brothers and Sisters, Are You Ready?* is probably the finest party the band has ever thrown. The sweet blues of their 1993 debut, *Five Hundred Pounds*, is still there in the mix, but the influence of Johnson's dub reggae project Alkaline has morphed the band into more of a raucous groove machine than ever before. Imagine a wild 1970s rock band recording in Jamaica while rolling around in a souped-up Charger, and you can figure out where Johnson and his merry band are coming from. "Things have to constantly evolve," he says. "If we got stuck in a hairstyle and that was our whole identity, and we didn't live up to it



Big Sugar's Gordie Johnson: glucose talking!

on every album, then people would stop checking us out.

Luckily we've set ourselves up in a way that our fans expect us to change it up a little bit from album to album."

## As the Crows fly

The album took a year and a half to record, allowing Johnson to work with the likes of Wide Mouth Mason and Double Trouble on their respective albums. He also did some remix work for fellow groove rockers the Black Crows, who recruited Johnson after hearing his Alkaline album, *Extra Long Life*. "They just asked me if I'd do some Alkaline-style stuff on their music," explains Johnson, "and of course I said yes."

While in the studio, Johnson applied a unique litmus test to his material, which smoothly shifts from buzzed-out assaults to funky jams. "It had to make me feel like a 17-year-old who had stolen the car for the weekend," he explains jovially.

In keeping with the band's aim to create the ultimate Canadian house party, the album closes with a Hendrix-esque version of "O Canada." Perhaps even more importantly, the band chose to repeat the success of their 1999 EP *Chauffe à Bloc* by simultaneously releasing a French version of the disc entitled *Brothers and Sisters, Étes-Vous Ready?* "As an entertainer, you can't really entertain people if they can't understand what you're singing," Johnson postulates. "Music does transcend language barriers, but at the end of

the day you sing along with songs where you can identify with the lyrics. What's interesting is that a song in a different language can take on a completely different viewpoint. I had to rewrite the songs—I couldn't just translate them. When we perform these songs in French, I have a different story in my head and a different emotion to convey."

## King Louis

The retro vibe of the disc reflects Johnson's appreciation of the '70s rock aesthetic. "I love the grandeur of it," he says. "There's a sense that everything is an event. We came through the 1990s watching punk rock become a big corporate business—selling scrappy little bands in messy clothes, where all you need is attitude. In my world, you need more than that. You need skill and you have to entertain people with more than just your attitude. Louis Armstrong had a lot of attitude, but he had a great deal of skill and finesse as well."

The desire to be an entertainer is what keeps Johnson on the road. "I love playing—that's it," he says. "I'll suffer through all the other indignities of being an entertainer just for the two hours we get to stand on stage, playing for people. I'll sit in a tour bus for 17 hours to get to Fort McMurray, or eat at truckstops for a month. The payoff is when I get to strap on a double-neck guitar, stroll out on a stage and we get to have a great time."

Big Sugar  
Stage 13, Camrose, Alberta • Fri, July 13

# ROCK CENTRAL STATION

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## JULY 20-21: PLEASURE PIRATES



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DAYS 2001

# Elevator rises to the occasion

It's hard to get a *Complete Perspective* on Rick White

BY WHITEY HOUSTON

Exactly what it is that makes Rick White, the primary creative force behind über-indie band Elevator, tick is a hard thing to quantify. It often seems like the wizard behind the curtain is reluctant to reveal himself, content instead to tantalize listeners with nebulous *decoupage* images, letting the music supply the imagery instead. Elevator has certainly crammed a lot of audible imagery into its latest opus, *A Taste of Complete Perspective*: birdies, ocean waves and all manner of field recordings augment the rudimentary pop songs, layered with fuzzy bass and shwacked-out wind-synths until it all becomes something distinctively Elevator.

It's a process that White, drummer Mark Gaudet and bassist (and wife, but bassist first) Tara White took nearly a decade to master. "We spent a lot of time on this record," says White. "The field recordings were recorded while touring across Canada. We wanted this record to contain a part of what we have experienced.... When you play with the same people long enough, you become very comfortable with what you're doing—we've

been a band for nearly 10 years!" White sounds as if he's shocked even himself with this revelation before adding, "And we've had the same equipment for nine!" (My suggestion that it may be time for a double-live album is quickly dismissed.)

After parting ways with Sub Pop, a label they have been involved with for as long as I can remember (and I'm old), Elevator went home and began recording in earnest. "We spent a lot more time than we ever had previously experimenting with different mixes and versions of these songs until they felt right," says White. During the recording process, they serendipitously contacted their friends at Teenage USA and a deal was struck. "We were especially happy that Teenage USA agreed to make the album available on vinyl since all of our previous records have had vinyl pressings," White says. (It's refreshing to hear that things do occasionally work out where the business of rock 'n' roll is concerned.)

### Sunset Trip

Speaking of all things rock 'n' roll working out, I can't resist prying a little into the forthcoming Eric's Trip reunion tour and how that might affect Elevator. "It doesn't affect Elevator," White replies flatly. "When Eric's Trip broke up we did so somewhat badly. Now that it's been five



Elevator has reached the top floor with new disc

years, the situation has changed and we felt that it would be fun to go out and finish the final tour, play some of the old songs we miss and finally bring some closure to that band."

Elevator, like Eric's Trip before it, specializes in mysterious-sounding music, so it comes as something of a surprise to me that White would be so forthright about the band's plans. "The reunion tour is a one-shot deal," he says, "whereas I see Elevator as the

natural progression beyond what Eric's Trip had accomplished." Just as the staticky hum that precedes Elevator's "I'm a Radio Station" evolves from chaos to clarity, I'm beginning to suspect that maybe the wizard isn't that enigmatic after all. Maybe he's just a really nice, talented guy. ☀

Elevator  
With litterbug, Man-At-Arms • New  
City Likwid Lounge • Fri, July 13

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4:00 PM - 5:30 PM The Foggy Minded Mountain Boys  
5:30 PM - 7:00 PM All the Rage in Dallas  
7:00 PM - 8:30 PM Lonesome & Then Some  
9:00 PM - 11:00 PM CHRIS CUMMINGS

### FRIDAY, JULY 20

11:00 AM - 12:00 PM Swing This Tri  
12:00 PM - 12:30 PM Klondike Kate  
1:00 PM - 1:45 PM Illusions  
1:45 PM - 3:30 PM Swing This Trio  
3:30 PM - 5:00 PM Working Class Band  
5:30 PM - 6:45 PM The Joes  
6:45 PM - 8:30 PM King Muskafa  
9:00 PM - 11:00 PM CAPTAIN TRACTOR

Presented by

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### SATURDAY, JULY 21

11:00 AM - 2:00 PM Shoreline  
12:00 PM - 12:30 PM Klondike Kate  
12:30 PM - 1:30 PM Darcy Greaves Trio  
1:30 PM - 3:45 PM Shoreline  
4:00 PM - 5:15 PM Dawn Chubai  
5:15 PM - 7:00 PM Souled Out  
7:00 PM - 8:30 PM The Big Breakfast  
Boogie Band  
9:00 PM - 11:00 PM SOUL SACRIFICE -  
A SANTANA CELEBRATION

### MONDAY, JULY 23

11:00 AM - 12:00 PM The Hitmen  
12:00 PM - 12:30 PM Klondike Kate  
12:30 PM - 1:30 PM Maple Creek  
Bluegrass Band  
1:30 PM - 3:30 PM The Hitmen  
3:30 PM - 5:00 PM Sweet Abilis  
5:00 PM - 7:00 PM Thirst'n Howl  
7:00 PM - 8:30 PM The Aunt Edna  
Spoon Collection  
9:00 PM - 11:00 PM CHILLIWACK

### Friday, July 20

9:00 PM - 11:00 PM  
presented by CKUA

### CAPTAIN TRACTOR

Thursday, July 19  
9:00 PM - 11:00 PM  
presented by CFCW

**CHRIS CUMMINGS**

### Friday, July 20

9:00 PM - 11:00 PM  
presented by CKUA

### CAPTAIN TRACTOR

Thursday, July 19  
9:00 PM - 11:00 PM  
presented by CFCW

**CHRIS CUMMINGS**

### Monday, July 23

9:00 PM - 11:00 PM  
presented by CKUA

### CAPTAIN TRACTOR

Thursday, July 19  
9:00 PM - 11:00 PM  
presented by CFCW

**CHRIS CUMMINGS**

### Monday, July 23

9:00 PM - 11:00 PM  
presented by K-ROCK

### CHILLIWACK

Thursday, July 19  
9:00 PM - 11:00 PM  
presented by K-ROCK

**CHRIS CUMMINGS**





BY DAVE JOHNSTON

### The columnist always goes down with his ship

It's been one of those days, the kind where the ship feels like it's going to sink. Even now, as I furiously type out these words, my desk is covered in scraps of paper, flyers and phone messages—all of them dealing with the mini-explosion of activity in the local clubs.

This Friday, of course, is shaping up to be the highlight of the entire month, as two excellent events square up for an electronic showdown. The programming couldn't be any more different, mind you, but they're both worth the money.

Over at Red's, the Gatecrasher tour is set to blow the room away with its brilliant light show—featuring the most powerful laser show on the road today, according to Def Star promoter Keith Rubuliak. Of course, there's also the music, supplied by American trance jock Sandra Collins, British queen Jon Pleased Winmin and former Home resident Stuart Rowell. Opening up the room is Greg Wynn, one of the young talents behind United Productions. Upstairs, there's a second room overlooking the main stage which will feature a core of local types, including Split Milk, David Stone, Charlie Mayhem and Slav. Tickets are still available through Feroshus, Divine, Underground WEM, Soular, Red's and Ticketmaster.

Down on Whyte Avenue, junglists will probably be lining up at Parliament to catch a rare appearance by British producer and spinner Kenny Ken. Sponsored by Circa Footwear and Foosh, the night will also feature Dune Recordings artist Double A from Montreal, live performances by locals Sync and Lady J and MC Deadly, as

well as sets by Celcius and Gundam. Tickets are only \$10 in advance, available exclusively at Foosh.

At the end of the month, Nexustribe will be restarting their Freedom Friday residency at New City Suburbs. Hosted by Ariel and Roel, the new Freedom night will shift toward a sophisticated progressive house sound akin to the likes of Danny Tenaglia and Steve Lawler. The night will feature both local and touring guests on a weekly basis. More details to come.

August will also bring us Something Special 2 on the Labour Day long weekend. The two-day event will take



Sandra Collins

place at an outdoor venue just beyond the city limits, and will feature a host of locals alongside Jon the Dentist, John "00" Flemming and the Stimulant DJs. Ticketholders will also be eligible for a discounted ticket for the upcoming Slinky tour later in the month, which will feature club resident Guy Ornadel. In my humble opinion, this is a night you can't afford to miss—Ornadel's first *Slinky Superclub* DJ's disc is an essential bit of listening, with an excellent blend of banging progressive house and funky techno. He's already been recognized in his native England as a name to watch in the coming year, so we may not get another chance to see someone of his calibre wandering back in our direction anytime soon. After all, Timo Maas played at Freedom Fridays back in 1999 to a half-empty room, and have we seen him since?

Also, let's not forget about the Crystal Method show on August 2 at the Joint. Although the venue might seem like an odd choice—all right, all right, it is an odd choice—the show is

probably going to be a highlight of the summer, despite the fact you might have to elbow your way around a room normally reserved for rockers. But what could be more subversive than taking over a rock club with the evil sounds of "rave" music? Just in time for the opening of the World's, too.

The new material by the American group is shaping up to be interesting, as well. Their new album, *Tweekend*, sounds like a departure for them, if the new single is anything to go by. "The Name of the Game" is loaded with the usual samples and funky breaks, but they've recruited Eric Kupper and Hybrid for remix duties. Even without the help, the single is a compelling bit of thunder for the speakers.

One more thing. Donald Claude next Thursday at Parliament. If you've listened to his new *Mixed Live* disc on Moonshine, or if you've ever seen him perform, then you know that you need to be there. If you haven't, plan on wearing out your shoes and calling in late to work the next day.

Now I know why I do this job. ☺

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## disc reVUEs



**TIMO MAAS CONNECTED  
(KINETIC/FUSION III)**

After releasing the brilliant *Music for the Moases* collection last year, you'd figure that superstar remixer and DJ Timo Maas would put together an amazing follow-up, one worthy of his high profile. But while *Connected* certainly has its moments, it's stunning to hear the German spin in a different pattern.

The best part of any Maas setlist is the quality track selection, and much of *Connected* benefits from the choice cuts. The first disc boasts Lon Alexander's wicked remix of Mad Dogs' "Sudden Journey"—itself a creation of Maas, Alexander, Martin Buttrich and Andy Boleshon—as well as Satoshi Tomiie's sublime "Love in Traffic." Outside of that, the disc floats along a progressive house groove, buoyed by Deep Dish's rework of Delerium's "Innocente" and Rozzo's "Into Your Heart."

Maas bashes right into his breakbeat tendencies with the second disc, starting with his brilliant reworking of Fatboy Slim's "Star 69." Among the highlights are Sonic Infusion's "Reformatted" and the Dave Clarke remix of Midfield General's "Coatnoise," but for the most part, it's a showcase of Maas's own production skills and some clever studio fixes to mask the transitions—reverb and echo effects abound here. Which is surprising, considering how good Maas can be in a live setting.

What's most disappointing, though, is the aimless mood of *Connected*. While *Music for the Moases* (or even his ultra-rare *Desert Trancing* mix disc for Mixmag magazine) featured a

lot of drama in its sequencing and mixes, *Connected* wanders around with no particular place to go. The tracks are boss, but the trip is kind of pointless. ★★★—DAVE JOHNSTON

**BABY BLUE SOUNDCREW PRIVATE  
PARTY VOLUME 2 (UNIVERSAL)**

Canada's own Baby Blue Soundcrew earned both record-breaking sales and much hearty criticism with their *Private Party Volume 1*, which sold 90,000 units and earned the group a spot in the hearts of mainstream fans nationwide. It goes without saying that *Volume 2* mimics the formula that gained them such notoriety in the first place; unfortunately, it's the formula that attracted the most flak from previous followers of the group.

Still, the disc's mixture of national and international stars is refreshing, and it's extremely comforting to hear a De La Soul song mixed with a Jolly Black song. This technique alone does a lot to restore the credibility of the compilation industry (and Baby Blue's reputation). In fact, of the original material on the album, it's the group's work with Jolly and Baby Cham that first draws listeners in. While their duet, "The Day Before," isn't likely to become the most sought-after song on the project, it nicely picks up where the group left off last year.

With previous hits by Li'l Kim ("How Many Licks?"), Eminem ("The Way I Am") and Dr. Dre ("The Next Episode"), *Private Party Volume 2* supplies willing listeners with plenty of mood and background enjoyment. However, many of the mixes are sloppy and inconsistent, and even more are disguised with lazy sound effects and calls. Hearing the group mix a sped-up, remixed version of Cutty Ranks's "Limbo By Limb" with a much slower, traditional version is exactly the kind of fatuous touch which will slowly but surely cause Baby Blue Soundcrew's downfall in the urban market.

While *Private Party Volume 2* does require a preview before a purchase, the exclusive songs and star appeal may be the defining factors in this series. ★★★—SEAN JOYNER

**BACKROOM VODKA BAR—10324 Whyte Ave** • MON: Sense, deep house with Erin Eden, Whisper and guests • WED: The Forum, with Robert Alan and DJ Calus • THU: Fresh 'n' Funky, house with resident DJ Deluxx and guests • FRI: Pilot Episode, with Seksion and Tripswitch and guests • SAT: Bustin' Chops, with DJ Tanner, the Megaforce crew and weekly guests

**BLACK DOG FREEHOUSE—10425**

**Whyte Ave, 439-1082** • TUE: Digital Underdog, hip hop with Sonny Grimezz, C-Sekshun, and Megaforce • SUN: What The Hell, downtempo beats with DJ Tryptomen

**CALIENTE NIGHTCLUB—10815 Jasper Avenue**

**425-0850** • THU: Element, with DJ Christopher and weekly guests • FRI: Funktion Fridays, with Two Vexx and DJ Invincible • SAT: guest DJs • SUN: Ladies Night with DJ Invincible and guests—JUL 15: MC J-Money

**CRISTAL LOUNGE—10336 Jasper Ave, Info 426-7521** • FRI: DJ Alex • Sat: Red Hot Saturdays, with Al-V (Calgary)

**DONNA—The Citadel Theatre, 10177-99 Street, Info 429-3338** • FRI: DJ Alex • Sat: Red Hot Saturdays, with Dr. Yvo and guests—JUL 13 & 14: Erin Eden & Whisper

**EVAR AFTER—10148-105 St (late night/after hours)**

• THU: Rewind with Slav and guests • FRI: Energie, Thunder, Thunder Dave, Icaro and James Gregory • SAT: Wil Dancer, Donovan, Juicy and Tomek

**THE GALLERY—10018-105 St (late night/after hours)**

• FRI: Protege, Andy Morgan, Donovan, Charlie Mayhem, guests • SAT: James Gregory, Crunchie, Jay Machabb, Icaro, Thunder Dave

**HALO—10538-Jasper Ave, 423-2400**

• THU: Soul What?, with Tanner and Echo • FRI: For Those Who Know... with Ryan Mason and DJ Ameretto and guests • SAT: How Sweet It Is, with Junior Brown and special guests • SUN: As Good As It Gets, with DJ Deluxx

**IRON HORSE—8101-103 St, 438-1907**

• FRI: Alix • SAT: DJ Funshine aka That's The Guy On TV, isn't it?

**LIFE—10089 Jasper Ave, 425 8787**

• SUN: L.P., Tiff-Slip, Icaro, Thunder Dave, Neal K and guests

**LUSH/THE REV—10030A-102 St., 424-2851**

• WED: Main-The Classic, retro with DJ Loki; Velvet—progressive house with Ariel & Roel • THU: Trademark, tech house with residents Tryptomene and Split Milk, with

weekly guests—JUL 12: Matty (Van.) • FRI: Main-Fluid, with the Happy Bastards and guests; Velvet-DJ Blue Jay • SAT: Turbo, progressive trance and house with alternating residents and guests—JUL 14: Deko-Ze (Toronto) with Ariel & Roel; Velvet: Forties 'n' Nines, with Runer and Sundog • SUN: Sunday School, with Anthony Donohue, Donovan, Will Danger, Icaro, LP, Tory P, Dave Therrian and Bobby Torpedo

**NEW CITY COMPOUND—10167-112 St., 413-4578** • FRI: Cherry, with DJs Burnproof and Sonics • SUN: Schocolate Sundays, w/Kool Hand Luc, Remo Williams and guests

**PARLIAMENT—10551 Whyte Ave**

• TUE: Anthem, jungle with DJ Celsius and guests • THU: Shake with Solo, Geoffrey J and Styles and guests • FRI: Fevah, hip hop and R&B with DJs Ice & Quake • SAT: Progressive Club Culture Narrated by Cary Chang • FRI JUL 13: Kenny Ken (UK) with Double A (Montreal); Sync & Lady J, Celcius, Gundam and MC Deadly

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**SQUIRES—10505-82 Ave, downstairs** • MON: Local Motive with rotating hosts DJ Waterboy, Genome, Kryptokane and guests

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• SAT JUL 14-104 St., Bsmrt, 905-8024 • FRI: aka Vaas, Mr. Rowley, Tristan • SAT: Manny Muliatto and Locks Garant, Solo, Ryan Mason and Lickety Split

**SUGARBOWL—10936-88 Ave** • SAT: The Missing Chapters, with Dr. Durant and Cicerio

**SUITE 69—8232-103 Street, upstairs** • SUN: Infusion, with DJs Diabolik and Headspin

**THERAPY (late night/after hours)** • 10028-102 Street (alley entrance), Info 903-7666 • FRI: Upstairs—Greg Wynn, Cool Hand Luc, Tripswitch, LP; Bunker—Tryptomenie, Gundam

• SAT: Upstairs—Sweets, Program, Bobby Torpedo, Dragon; Bunker—Alias, Saki and Spanky, Anthony Donahue

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# NEWSOUNDS

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## SPACER THE BEAMER (PALM PICTURES)

It's rare for this reviewer to get excited about an electronic record that's aimed more at the dance floor than at audiophile geeks, but the third solo effort from Luke Gordon (a.k.a. Spacer) may be the best dance record of the year.

Don't let the trip-hoppin' Portishead style of the album's lead track, "Smile," fool you; with the frantic beats and oh-so-memorable electronic melodies of "Curse Rub" and "The Beamer" (the video for the title track is included in the multimedia package, a freaky series of animated runners jogging through European land- and cityscapes), Gordon shows that while his material is as fresh as the work of Add (N) to X, Squarepusher and Scanner, he can also stick to a groove.

But Gordon doesn't rely solely on electronics; for instance, violins, saxes and horns add to the jazzed-up beats of "Houston." There's a musical grownupness to Spacer's work; nuances that aren't obvious until the third or fourth listen—that is, if you haven't already danced yourself into the floor.

★★★★★ —STEVEN SANDOR



## VARIOUS ARTISTS AVALON BLUES: A TRIBUTE TO THE MUSIC OF MISSISSIPPI JOHN HURT (VANGUARD)

Dick Waterman—who managed Mississippi John Hurt during the all-too-brief three-year period before his death in the late '60s when blues aficionados rediscovered him after decades spent in obscurity—seems to have an inexhaustible supply of anecdotes illustrating Hurt's gentle sense of humour and warm, kindly personality. One of the most moving can be found in the liner notes of the 1967 album *The Immortal Mississippi John Hurt*; it takes place backstage one night after Hurt had finished playing and one of the young admirers asked him when they all would meet again. According to Waterman, Hurt tapped his heart and said, "We are sure to meet in here. If I

keep you in my heart, which I surely will, and if you keep me in your heart, and I hope that you will, then we will always have the other person anytime that we want to look in our heart."

The new collection *Avalon Blues* consists of new performances songs written by or associated with Hurt, courtesy of such roots-music stars as Gillian Welch, Chris Smither, Taj Mahal, Steve Earle, Ben Harper and Bruce Cockburn—all of whom seem to have kept their admiration for Hurt's beautiful music perfectly preserved within their hearts. The material here ranges from Geoff Muldaur's version of the easygoing novelty song "Chicken" to "Angels Laid Him Away," a shivery account of dying violently and young sung with characteristic understatedness by Lucinda Williams. Only Victoria Williams's caterwauling on the traditional hymn "Since I've Laid My Burden Down" comes off as a little affected—but even this track (arranged for banjo, ukulele, bass and rainstick) gradually achieves an integrity and power all its own. By the time John Hiatt closes out this wonderful, affectionate album by singing "I'm Satisfied," the sentiment seems like a gross understatement. ★★★★ —PAUL MATVYCHUK

## Critical Bandwidth (Nutone)

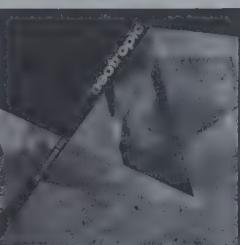
While the content of most music compilations tends to be all over the map by their very nature, that's nothing compared to the variety of sounds on this latest Nutone release. Bringing together bands and artists from Vancouver, England, France, Germany and even India, *Critical Bandwidth* is a disc to be digested in track-by-track chunks; listening to it all at once could induce schizophrenia.

Highlights? Liquid Loop's "One" shows that the art of writing ambient electronica for the lounge crowd has hit Germany, big time, while Vancouver's Panurge surprises with "Listen to Your Own," an acoustic Brit-poppish number that would make you scratch your head and wonder why it's on an electronic comp if it weren't so damn catchy. AntiCoolAction (a combination of artists from India and Italy) and their "Indian Vibe (Dub Flute Solo)" features electronic pulses designed to sound like bleating farm animals—all this over the clanking of machinery, including the whining of a propeller, in the background. Vancouver's Stéb Sly (who will be familiar to music fans as the DJ behind Freshbread, the alter ego of SNFU's Rob Johnson) also checks in with the samba beats of "Taste of the Groove."

All in all, a fascinating comp, if a somewhat frantic one. Try playing this all at once at your own risk. ★★★★ —STEVEN SANDOR

## NEOTROPIC LA PROCHAINNE FOIS (NINJA TUNE)

*La Prochaine Fois* just may be the trippiest, least accessible body of work that Ninja Tune has released to date—and that's saying a lot, considering the groundbreaking stuff the label has unleashed over the last several years.



It wouldn't be fair to call the material produced by Riz Maslen and bandmates "songs"; the tracks blend into each other, creating a steady, atonal soundscape of acoustic, electric and electronic elements, including Japanese-style strings interwoven with haunting electronic sounds and sporadic beats. Only "Still"—powered by a steady electronic drumbeat, a flute loop, chants and some neat East Indian sounds—follows a steady structure for longer than a minute.

It all comes off as a soundtrack—and it should, considering the second disc included with the package is a road movie constructed by Maslen that uses the sounds of Neotropic as the backdrop. It's a multimedia celebration of experimentation: befuddling at times, joyously good at others. ★★★ —STEVEN SANDOR



## STEREOMUD PERFECT SELF (SONY)

If you have a weak memory, you should beware of this new release from Stereomud, one of the first metal acts to be inked to hip hop label Loud Records. This effort is so par-for-the-course when it comes to modern metal, it's hard to pick up anything that'll stick with you even after five or six listens.

Yes, "Leave (Back Up)" bears all the hallmarks of a rock radio hit, but it offers absolutely nothing to recommend it over any other metal band with flat-chord mania and a hoarse lead singer. And thanks to *Perfect Self*'s befuddled lack of originality, I have little else to say about it, save for the fact that it's not very memorable.

Listen: I've had this CD for a couple of weeks and I've had to struggle hard to find anything to say about it at all. Maybe Stereomud is a signal that the metal scene has got to tap into something new, because this faux-rap-by-throaty-singer thing has definitely run its course. In the case of Stereomud, don't believe the hype. ★ —STEVEN SANDOR

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# The Cho must go on

Comedian overcomes  
Hollywood with *I'm  
the One That I Want*

BY PAUL MATWYCHUK

**B**ack in 1994, ABC debuted the first sitcom in TV history with an Asian-American star. The show, which bore the somewhat precious title *All-American Girl*, was conceived as a vehicle for Korean standup comic Margaret Cho, whose outrageous act, full of hilarious imitations of her dotty, nagging mother and raunchy anecdotes about her promiscuous sex life (a typical routine would involve her description of the first time she was fisted—to wit, "I felt like a fucking Muppet") made her a popular figure on the college circuit and a particular favourite of gay men. She even won an American Comedy Award in '94 as Female Comedian of the Year. Unfortunately, while *All-American Girl* may have been a groundbreaking show, it stunk. ABC took Cho's edgy routines and bad-girl persona and smoothed them out into a bland, family-friendly half-hour full of tired one-liners and hand-me-down "Asian" references that Cho, in her new concert film *I'm the One That I Want*, aptly refers to as "Saved By the Gong."

A large chunk of *I'm the One That I Want* is devoted to Cho's account of how what initially looked like the biggest break of her entire show business career wound up nearly destroying her—and Cho tells the story with a zest and a level of comic rage that can only come from someone with a head full of accumulated resent-

ments who has had to wait six years to vent them all. Cho's nightmare began before she even started filming the pilot episode: her producer phoned her up after her initial screen test to tell her that the network had a problem with, er, "the fullness of her face," and demanded that she lose a significant amount of weight if she wanted a chance at a series. (Now, while Cho is certainly heavier than most actresses on TV these days, she's still perfectly attractive—and really funny and stylish to boot. If I were a TV executive, the only problem I'd have with her appearance would be her freakishly tiny pinky fingers.)

Anyway, Cho embarked on a humiliating, punishing makeover program organized by the network: four-hour workouts six days a week with a personal trainer, a starvation diet planned by a personal nutritionist and—most ridiculous of all—a series of sessions with an "Asian consultant" when the network, registering resistance to Cho's persona from a few Asian-American organizations, decided Cho needed to take some remedial Asian lessons. (All this so that Cho could properly play... herself.) The show was cancelled after a handful of episodes, and Cho, her self-esteem all but destroyed, quickly plunged into a tailspin of depression, drug and alcohol abuse and unwise romantic entanglements.

## Found Wanting?

*I'm the One That I Want* has, to a large extent, been conceived as a "survivor's story," and the audience—composed of hundreds of rabid Cho loyalists from her San Francisco home town—

is more than ready to cheer her every step of the way. At the same time, though, you get the suspicion that Cho is soft-pedalling a lot of the details of her story. Her explanations of why she kowtowed to the ABC bigwigs so readily ("I was young," "I was unsure of myself") feel a little pat, and her account of the moment she decided to clean up her act and get sober feels much too easy and glib. Cho lets herself off the hook way too quickly: in her standup routine, she gets a lot of mileage out of her mockery of the stereotype of the acquiescent, soft-spoken Asian woman—so why did she wind up embodying that stereotype in her dealings with the network? How could anyone who brags of having been "raised by drag queens" not give a little lip back to the producer who hooks her up with a "hot" head writer who's "just come off *Empty Nest*?" Or who, when the ratings started to decline, began firing almost every single Asian cast member?

## The vagina monologue

Even with those faults, however, *I'm the One That I Want* is still a must-see, simply because Cho is really, really fucking funny. I laughed pretty much all the way through this 95-minute performance: I laughed at Cho's explanation of why fag hags are "the backbone of the gay community"; I laughed at her fantasy about what would happen if Karl Lagerfeld wound up in prison; I laughed at her speculations about the daily life of the nurse who showed up at her hos-



Margaret Cho rocks the movie *I'm the One That I Want*

pital bedside one morning announcing, "My name is Gwen and I'm here to waarrsh your vagina"; I laughed at her description of two alcoholics having sex; and I especially laughed at all the bits involving Cho's mother, who I honestly believe is one of the funniest, richest characters in the history of standup comedy. (At the end of the movie, Cho does her classic bit about her mother curiously examining a pornographic gay magazine named *Assmaster* as an encore.)

No wonder she looked so uncomfortable on *All-American Girl*. Cho was never cut out to be a role model—and in *I'm the One That I Want*, she's at her irreverent, off-colour best, gleefully retaking her rightful place as the shame of the entire Asian-American community. ♦

## *I'm the One That I Want*

Directed by Lionel Coleman • Starring  
Margaret Cho • Zeidler Hall, The  
Citadel • Fri-Mon, July 13-16, 9pm •  
Metro Cinema • 425-9212

# Parsley Days: the rites of sprig

Low budget only  
occasionally  
hampers Dorfman's  
indie comedy

BY JOSEF BRAUN

**S**hot against the endearingly colourful, flaking rowhouses of Halifax's north end, *Parsley Days*, written, directed, produced and photographed by Andrea Dorfman, is a modest little bargain-basement-budgeted debut about the difficulties of staying true to yourself when faced with the inexplicable desire to break up with a perfectly good romantic partner. Unfortunately, the film's depiction of its complex premise only scratches the surface—but then, *Parsley Days* is really just as much about the delight of making a film with a bare minimum of resources and how amazingly well you can outfit an entire cast with only \$100, a good eye for kitsch and a thorough scav-

enge of your local Value Village.

Kate (Megan Dunlop) is a bicycle maintenance instructor with a perfect boyfriend (he's kind, handsome, hip and fondly dubbed a male lesbian by Kate's gay friends). The boyfriend is a birth control outreach worker known as the King of Contraception, yet despite his expertise and sensitivity in the field, Kate finds that she's four weeks pregnant with their child. Kate keeps her condition under wraps long enough to decide she wants to abort both her fetus (which her amusing herbalist pal suggests she can achieve painlessly by consuming ungodly amounts of fresh parsley)—although she neglects to inform her that eating that much parsley can give you wicked heartburn) and her five-year relationship, all the while developing a strange affection for a cheesy-looking bike thief with a Heath Ledger haircut who always drives by on his low rider in slow motion just when Kate needs reminding of her innermost longings. Kate's disposition is anything but reckless, though, and she finds herself procras-

tinating for *Parsley Days*'s duration (which, it should probably be said, is quite brief) with little that's revelatory occurring in the interim.

## Dorfman's compensation

Dorfman's precarious choice of subject matter (a director who has her heroine choose both to have an abortion and break up with her lovable and devoted boyfriend certainly isn't trying to win cheap sympathy from a wide audience) is as admirable as her ability to bring such a shoestring, very homemade feeling project to fruition with more than a little charm. Yet despite a nice, thoughtful performance from Dunlop, Dorfman also steers clear of any opportunity to evoke genuine emotional resonance from her story and consistently avoids confronting Kate with any deeper understanding of the challenges she's given. Dorfman chooses instead to maintain a low-key brand of cuteness (the cast is cute, the clothes are cute, the music is cute—hell, even the bikes are cute) that is often highly dependent on the audience's familiarity with the particular milieu and lifestyles of

her boho characters.

Also, Dorfman's insertion of progressively limp fantasy sequences and visual metaphors simply emphasize her directorial weaknesses—weaknesses that spring more from inexperience than lack of talent. Sometimes when people see a film like *Parsley Days*, they look at the technical flaws and shabby production values and think, "That's a typical Canadian film." But it's easy to forget that ultra-low-budget first features like this generally all look and sound the same, no matter what country they're made in (in fact, to my mind, *Parsley Days* bears more than a few resemblances to the only slightly superior and similarly-themed American low-budget feature *Chutney Popcorn*, a movie that wound up gracing the cover of the highbrow film journal *Cinéaste*). At least in having a film like *Parsley Days* playing here, we have the opportunity to support the flawed but notable work of an up-and-comer of our own. ♦

## *Parsley Days*

Directed by Andrea Dorfman • Starring  
Megan Dunlop, Michael Leblanc and  
Marla McLean • Opens Fri, July 13

# Gleaming the cubist

Thrilling *The Mystery of Picasso* lets you watch a genius create

BY JOSEF BRAUN

In the opening moments of Henri-Georges Clouzot's 1956 film *The Mystery of Picasso*, we see the shockingly youthful-looking 75-year-old painter standing in a pool of light within the inky darkness of some anonymous studio. His square torso is naked, he wears only a pair of shorts and he is transfixed by a blank canvas before him, gazing upon it with the focus and temperament one might give to a frightened animal. Accompanying this image, we hear the voice of the director describing an audience's longing to comprehend an artist's process of creation: "We'd have given anything to be in Rimbaud's mind when he was writing *Le Bateau Ivre*," Clouzot says. He then declares that, with this very film we are now watching, the time has finally come "to discover that secret mechanism that guides the creator in a perilous adventure."

Clouzot's film, naturally, can't quite live up to these heady, portentious claims. (After all, we are still only able to see the physical results of the artist's impulse—and, while watching a dab or a line proliferate into inspired frenzies can perhaps give us some insight into a work's development, can that truly be said to reveal the inner workings of the artist?) As Lou Reed says, "Between thought and expression lies a lifetime." Still, as *The Mystery of Picasso* progresses, the patient viewer is rewarded with a singular spectacle of ingenious creative delight that defies criticism, and is held awestruck by how a once intimidatingly blank space becomes transformed into a visionary work of art (art which Picasso was said to have destroyed after the shooting so that it could survive solely on celluloid).

## Inspector Clouzot

The film's first approach to the challenge of depicting Picasso's process is Clouzot's most innovative, yet also the least intriguing. Clouzot had Picasso do ink sketches on transparent screens which he filmed from the opposite side, allowing us to see the applications as they're being made without having to peek over the artist's shoulder for a better look. I found this method frustrating because the removal of the artist also seems to remove a major part of this mystery the title alludes to. As well, regardless of their value as finished products, the pieces created in this first section are not as technically involved or as overwhelming as what is soon to come (although, of these, the more abstract pieces tend to offer more surprises).

Picasso eventually begins to work on broad canvases with oil, and

Clouzot abandons his earlier filming technique for a simple stop-start process, tracking each new development bit by bit, capturing its breadth in Cinemascope. Picasso seems adequately warmed up by this point and his fevered playfulness takes over, resulting in wildly imaginative paintings that morph marvelously until that magic moment when both the painter and the viewer are confident that the piece is finished according to its own logic of aesthetic perfection. Throughout all this, Georges Auric supplies a diverse selection of music (everything from flamenco to bebop drum solos) that sometimes distracts, but more often helps fuel the artist's already ample fire.

## Beach party

The final painting created for *The*

*Mystery of Picasso* was, for me, the most satisfying by far. Picasso works on a composition I'll call "A Cubist Day at the Beach." Figures and landscapes are drawn, then altered, then vanish only to reappear again in a completely different form and context. The constant wholesale revision of every aspect of the composition seems nearly insane, and at one point, after so many layers of paint have been buried under one another and bits of paper have been added to no greater effect, Picasso declares that the picture is going "very, very badly." And it's true; it's a mess. But he continues anyway. "You want drama, you got it," Picasso tells Clouzot, and proceeds, almost miraculously, to bring the work back to something beautiful, evocative, perfect. "All I wanted was to show the unexpectedness of naked truth," he says.

It's like Sonic Youth in their recording of "Total Trash" on the

*Daydream Nation* album or Jack Kerouac in that deliriously rambling first chapter of *On the Road*: they recklessly ride the waves along the razor-sharp brink of total chaos, only to suddenly glide mysteriously back, resuming perfect harmony and aesthetic wonder. The result is nothing less than awe-inspiring. *The Mystery of Picasso* is essential viewing. ☀

## *The Mystery of Picasso*

Directed by Henri-Georges Clouzot •

Featuring Pablo Picasso •

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# Final Fantasy: "My God—it's full of pixels!"

Animated epic has eye-popping imagery, desultory storytelling

BY JOSEF BRAUN

**B**esides being an obvious landmark in computer animation technology, in the realm of videogames turned feature films,

*Final Fantasy: The Spirits Within*

practically qualifies as highbrow entertainment and is certainly

deserving of a place within the upper echelons of the subgenre. But it's also a frustrating film. It makes use of a rather complex, self-contained mythology about alien phantoms who inhabit the earth's core after having crashed to our planet in a meteorite, but it also uses this mythology as an overstated metaphor for mankind's destructive relationship with the planet. The premise is intriguing enough for a science fiction adventure story—although a little too intellectual for the kiddies and a little too vague for the adults—but ultimately what I found disappointing about *Final Fantasy* was that it just wasn't as exciting or involving as I felt it should have been.

*Final Fantasy*'s post-apocalyptic narrative centres around Aki Ross

(voice of *The Joy Luck Club*'s Ming-Na), a young scientist whose prophetic dreams allude to a possible resolution to the war with the alien phantoms that have turned Earth's cities into scrap heaps and forced the humans to hide out in cavernous shielded research centres. The alien phantoms are gaseous, semi-transparent forms that appear to prey upon humans by sucking their souls right out of their bodies; the humans are planning a massive counterattack that they hope will decimate the subterranean phantoms from the Earth's core outward. Aki and her mentor, Dr. Sid (voice of Donald Sutherland), believe that such unprecedented and extreme measures would not only be futile in defeating the alien presence, but also do irreparable damage to what they view as the Earth's spirit. In Aki and Sid's view, everything that has form has a spirit, and by identifying and containing particular spirit waves, they can create a wave combination equal in intensity to that of the alien wave, and thus the two waves will cancel each other out. Got that?

#### Final analysis

If *Final Fantasy*'s bio-spiritual conceits sound a little hokey, that's partly because they're too convoluted to be properly explained and too inconsistent to make sense of any-

way—to put it simply, the characters talk too much but the audience is none the wiser for it. Director Hironobu Sakaguchi, who is also credited with the original story, creates a highly effective atmosphere of hopelessness, dread and solemnity, yet can't quite seem to let go of the film's ponderousness often enough to propel a story that's essentially designed to be an old-fashioned, rousing melodrama full of action-packed heroics. Considering how much is at stake in the world of the film, it's all too easy not to care very much about the proceedings.

One of *Final Fantasy*'s big problems in this regard, paradoxically, is a result of what is clearly the film's greatest strength: its visually astounding, hyper-realistic animation. Each of the human characters looks disturbingly real (and Steve Buscemi's comic relief character looks disturbingly like Jason Priestley); the minute shifts in their faces, the movement of their hair, the fluidity of their bodies as they walk—everything about them has an eerie air of reality. Yet for all that, the technology can hardly render even



Aki Ross in *Final Fantasy: The Spirits Within*

the most superficial emotional expression, making the moments of shock, horror or wonder register on the characters' masklike faces with all the affect of the action figures on *Thunderbirds*.

#### Not since *Flesh Gordon...*

The best reason to check out *Final Fantasy* is to ponder its boundless landscapes, its ever-twisting dream world, its hordes of monsters, spacecraft crashes and seas of fire. It's amazing to see the many different kinds of light and shadow at play in

this film, as well as the diverse angles and sinuous camera movements. Pure spectacle is rarely so satisfying, and when Sakaguchi concentrates simply on wowing the viewer with his visuals, the result is awesome—particularly the climactic sequence when the giant evil space penis shoots into the earth's gaping vaginal crater. (So much for highbrow symbolism.)

#### *Final Fantasy: The Spirits Within*

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ALLIANCE

# Flaxen arguments

Bimbo becomes barrister in lackluster *Legally Blonde*

BY PAUL MATWYCHUK

In *Legally Blonde*, Reese Witherspoon plays Elle Woods, a sorority sister so superficial and clothes-conscious that she shares her name with a fashion magazine. As the film opens, she has no greater concerns weighing on her mind than receiving pedicures, attending mixers and looking after her pampered pet chihuahua. But her entire world comes crumbling down around her beautiful, shell-like ears when her handsome boyfriend takes her out for an expensive dinner—and instead of proposing to her, as she completely expected he would, he announces that he wants to break up. "If I'm going to be a senator by the time I'm 30," he tells the heartbroken Elle, "I need someone who's serious."

And so, partly out of pique and partly out of a desperate desire to win back her ex's love, Elle decides to abandon her aspirations of becoming a fashion consultant and instead secretly applies to Harvard Law School. Miraculously, she scores a 179 on her LSAT, and thanks to a highly unorthodox admissions essay

(a videotape Elle tells one of her friends she hired a Coen brother to direct), she gets in. On the first day of classes, she runs into her former boyfriend in the hallway and when he asks her, dumbfounded, "You got into Harvard?" Elle wrinkles up her nose and cheerfully replies, "What—like it's hard?"

*Legally Blonde* belongs to one of my favourite movie sub-genres, movies like *Clueless* and *Dick* and *Bring It On*, which are devoted to the triumph of pretty, perky, slightly spoiled but nevertheless sweet-natured teens over the forces of everybody in the world foolish enough to underestimate them. These films are probably the closest thing we have right now to the screwball comedies of the '30s—they turn the teenage world of dating, shopping and dancing into a rich and responsibility-free a comic fantasyland as the world of debutantes, socialites and flighty heiresses that we associate with performers like Irene Dunne and Carole Lombard. And at their best, the teen actresses who specialize in these new teen comedies—Alicia Silverstone, Kirsten Dunst and Reese Witherspoon—have a sense of comic timing and an ability to make their spoiled, flighty characters

SEE NEXT PAGE

# The spy who came in from the veterinarian's

*Cats and Dogs* spays and neuters an entertaining premise

BY PAUL MATWYCHUK

The funniest scene in *Cats and Dogs* takes place during an emergency session of the World Dog Council, a sort of canine version of the United Nations, whose headquarters, a subtle hilariously informs us, are located in The Center of the Earth. The assembled delegates are in a terrible state of agitation, and there's a great gag when the secretary-general (who, if I had been writing the film, would have been named Dog Hammarskjold), after a few unsuccessful attempts to call the meeting to order, finally sighs and pulls out an electric can opener and opens a tin of Alpo. Every dog in the room instantly shuts up.

That moment gets to heart of what makes pets so funny (and endearing)—no matter how intelligent a dog or a cat might be, no matter how much of an honest-to-God "personality" they might seem to possess, there's still a core of essential *dogness* or *catness* to them that simply cannot be denied. The fact that many pets really do seem almost human only makes those

comedy

REVUE

moments when they revert to more animal-like habits seem more comical. And it's easy to believe that no matter how evolved dogs become thousands of years from now, even if they develop opposable thumbs and acquire the power of speech, they will still fall into a state of fascinated silence by the sound of an electric can opener.

Unfortunately, for the most part, *Cats and Dogs* seems to think animals are funnier the less they act like the animals they are. The film's premise is that cats and dogs have been locked in a secret, centuries-old struggle for the affections of mankind. Not only can they talk, but they have access to a supersophisticated network of military and intelligence-gathering equipment—radar, rockets, arsenals of James Bond-like weaponry, the whole nine yards—that they keep cleverly hidden away from the sight of humans. The film unfolds in the home of Professor Brody (Jeff Goldblum), an absent-minded allergist hot on the trail of a serum that will eliminate dog allergies from the face of the earth. Realizing such a vaccine would give put them at a hopeless disadvantage in re-establishing their dominance over the human world, the cat army—led by a power-mad Persian named Mr. Tinkles (voiced by Sean Hayes, Jack from TV's *Will*

and Grace), who's like a cross between Ernst Stavro Blofeld and Blofeld's cat—sets about sabotaging Brody's research.

## Tom Clancy meets Dog Fancy

What follows are all sorts of scenes in which various cats and dogs are shown typing on computers, wielding weapons, strapping themselves into specially designed cars and airplanes and otherwise using complicated gadgets against each other. (The movie resembles what might have happened if the gay couple played by Michael Keaton and John Michael Higgins in *Best in Show* had been assigned to direct *Clear and Present Danger*.) Some of this is good for a laugh, especially the two elaborate action sequences in which various highly trained cat assassins (including a pair of Siamese ninjas and a cute grey kitten whose meowing little voice abruptly changes into a menacingly deep Russian baritone whenever the humans leave the room) attempt to infiltrate the Brody home.

But director Lawrence Guterman's overbearing directing style—full of choppy editing and overly cartoonish camera angles—squeezes the charm out of most of this movie. Unlike George Miller, the director whose understated, storybook touch helped make *Babe* the gold standard of talking-animal

pictures, Guterman treats his animal cast like special effects instead of characters. (It doesn't help, either, that the script, by John Rega and Glenn Ficarra, doesn't contain enough heart—or wit—to make you care about its doggy heroes.) There's a lot of special effects ingenuity on display in *Cats and Dogs*, but not a lot of magic; instead of feeling transported into another world, you just feel like you're watching a \$50 million Meow Mix commercial.

Woof. ♦

## Cats and Dogs

Directed by Lawrence Guterman • Starring Jeff Goldblum, Elizabeth Perkins and the voices of Tobey Maguire, Sean Hayes and Alec Baldwin • Now playing



Don't cry for me, Abyssinian. Mr. Tinkles rallies the troops in *Cats and Dogs*

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Reese Witherspoon tests her legal limits in *Legally Blonde*

## Legally Blonde

Continued from previous page

charming instead of irritating that rivals even Lombard's.

## Irrational velvet

Sadly, though, *Legally Blonde* is a thoroughly formulaic waste of its premise and its star. I smiled at the scene in which Elle makes her first appearance in a Harvard classroom, dressed in her idea of an outfit befitting her new status as a "serious law student" (it includes a swanky, female-tailored smoking jacket in bright green velvet, a short skirt and knee-high boots)—and I laughed out loud at the bit where Elle's classmates set up their laptops, while Elle opens her purse and takes out a heart-shaped notepad and a pink pen with a fluffy pink feather on the cap.

But there's no inspiration to any of Elle's interactions with her teachers or her unfriendly fellow students (chief among them Selma Blair as the bitchy preppie who becomes Elle's romantic rival). This is, at heart, a very square movie—*Clueless* and *Dick* were about girls whose personalities wound up changing their environments for the better, whereas *Legally Blonde* is about a girl whose environment winds up improving her and helping her realize her "full potential." Elle, you see, turns out to have the instincts of a crackerjack lawyer and even winds up playing a pivotal advisory role in

a murder trial one of her professors is conducting. In the final scene, Elle explicitly states the film's theme: "If you believe in yourself, you can achieve anything." (*Legally Blonde* is strongly reminiscent of an earlier, similarly veiled tribute to conformity, the 1980 Goldie Hawn vehicle *Private Benjamin*.)

But this is too half-hearted a comedy for anyone to remember much about it half an hour after they've left the theatre, let alone

Legally Blonde  
Directed by Robert Luketic • Starring Reese Witherspoon, Selma Blair, Victor Garber and Luke Wilson • Opens Fri, July 13

# FILM WEEKLY

## NEW THIS WEEK

**Anchors Aweigh** (EFS) Gene Kelly, Frank Sinatra and Kathryn Grayson star in *Pal Joey* director George Sidney's sprawling 1945 musical about a pair of sailors eager to woo a few women during shore leave in Hollywood. *Provincial Museum Auditorium*; 102 Ave & 128 St; Mon, July 16, 8pm

**I'm the One That I Want** (M) Korean-American standup comic Margaret Cho talks about her battles with the ABC TV network over her image as the star of her own sitcom, *All American Girl*, and the suicidal tailspin she went into after the show was cancelled, in this live concert film directed by Lionel Coleman. *Ziegler Hall, The Citadel*; Fri-Mon, July 13-16, 7pm

**Jurassic Park III** (CO, FP) Sam Neill, William H. Macy and Téa Leoni star in *Jurassic Park III* director Joe Johnston's latest installment in the popular adventure series, in which a group of wealthy thrill-seekers find themselves marooned on a dinosaur-infested island and must rely on a renowned paleontologist to guide them to safety. (Opens Wed, July 18)

**Legally Blonde** (CO, FP) Reese Witherspoon, Matthew Davis, Selma Blair and Luke Wilson star in director Robert Luketic's comedy about a superficial young woman who enrolls in Harvard Law School in hopes of winning back her serious-minded ex-boyfriend. Based on the book by Amanda Brown.

**The Mystery of Picasso** (M) *The Wages of Fear* director Henri Georges Clouzot's unusual documentary follows artist Pablo Picasso step by step through the creation of 20 original canvases conceived especially for the film. *Ziegler Hall, The Citadel*; Fri-Mon, July 13-16, 7pm

**Pearl Days** (P) Megan Dunlop, Michael Leblanc and Maria MacLean star in *Swerve* director Andrea Dorfman's seriocomic about a woman who learns she is pregnant after breaking up with her supersensitive, long-time boyfriend and endeavours to induce a "herbalist abortion."

**The Score** (CO, FP) Robert De Niro, Edward Norton, Marlon Brando and Angela Bassett star in *Bowfinger* director Frank Oz's crime flick about an aging thief blackmailed into pulling one last heist by a wily young upstart.

**CyberWorld** (SC) The voices of Jenna Elfman, Matt Frewer and Dave Foley are fea-

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## FIRST-RUN MOVIES

**A.I.: Artificial Intelligence** (CO, FP, P) Haley Joel Osment, Jude Law, William Hurt and Frances O'Connor star in *Close Encounters of the Third Kind* writer-director Steven Spielberg's science fiction film about an extremely lifelike boy robot on a quest to become something more than a mere machine. Based on a short story by Brian Aldiss.

**The Animal** (CO) Rob Schneider, Colleen Haskell and Ed Asner star in director Luke Greenfield's slapstick comedy about a bumbling police cadet who experiences some bizarre side effects after a mad scientist transplants various animal organs into his body.

**Atlantis: The Lost Empire** (CO, FP) The voices of Michael J. Fox, James Garner, Claudia Christian and Mark Hamill are featured in *Beauty and the Beast* co-directors Gary Trousdale and Kirk Wise's animated adventure about a young turn-of-the-century explorer who embarks upon a submarine mission to find the lost city of Atlantis.

**Baby Boy** (CO) Tyrese Gibson, Ving Rhames, Tamara LaSeon Bass and Snoop Dogg star in writer-director John Singleton's "companion piece" to his 1991 hit *Baby's Back*, the story of an unemployed young black father who seems unable to accept responsibility for his life.

**Bridget Jones's Diary** (CO) Renée Zellweger, Hugh Grant and Colin Firth star in director Sharon Maguire's film version of Helen Fielding's popular novel about the romantic misadventures of a neurotic, weight-obsessed, kooky London young woman who embarks upon a submarine mission to find the lost city of Atlantis.

**Cats and Dogs** (CO, FP) Jeff Goldblum, Elizabeth Perkins and the voices of Alec Baldwin, Tobey Maguire, Sean Hayes and Susan Sarandon are featured in *Antz* co-director Larry Germer's talking-animals comedy about a young pup who winds up playing a pivotal role in a secret global war between cats and dogs.

**crazy/beautiful** (CO, FP) Kirsten Dunst, Jay Hernandez and Bruce Davison star in director John Stockwell's provocative romantic drama about a poor Latino boy who endangers his future by falling in love with a free-spirited but troubled girl from an affluent family.

**CyberWorld** (SC) The voices of Jenna Elfman, Matt Frewer and Dave Foley are fea-

tured in this collection of computer-animated short films (including segments from *The Simpsons* and *Antz*), presented in the 3-D IMAX format.

**Dr. Dolittle 2** (CO) Eddie Murphy and the voices of Norm MacDonald, Lisa Kudrow and Michael Rapaport are featured in *Next Friday* director Steve Carr's sequel to the 1998 comedy hit about a mild-mannered veterinarian with the ability to communicate with animals.

**The Fast and the Furious** (CO, FP) Vin Diesel, Paul Walker and Jordana Brewster star in *The Scream* director Rob Cohen's action movie about L.A. youth gangs who get their kicks adapting sports cars into high-performance muscle cars and pitting them against each other in illegal late-night races.

**Final Fantasy: The Spirits Within** (CO) The voices of Ming-na, Alec Baldwin, James Woods and Donald Sutherland are featured in director Hironobu Sakaguchi's computer-animated sci-fi fantasy about a terminally ill doctor in the year 2065 and her desperate search for the key that will help the overmatched Earthlings defeat an alien invasion.

**Gangster No. 1** (CO) Paul Bettany, David Thewlis and Malcolm McDowell star in *The Acid House* director Paul McGuigan's violent crime movie about a young gangster in late-'60s London who moves from idolizing his stylish, successful boss to plotting to take over the gang himself.

**Haunted Castle** (SC) *Alien* Adventure director Ben Stassen's computer-animated 3-D IMAX film that follows a rock musician's journey through a creepy mansion.

**Kiss of the Dragon** (CO) Jet Li, Bridget Fonda and Tchéky Karyo star in director Chris Nahon's martial-arts action movie about a Chinese intelligence officer who battles a deadly conspiracy during an assignment in Paris. Screenplay by Luc Besson and Robert Mark Kamen.

**A Knight's Tale** (CO) Heath Ledger, Rufus Sewell and Shannyn Sossamon star in *Payback* writer-director Brian Helgeland's crowd-pleasing action movie about a young peasant who disguises himself as a nobleman in order to compete in a series of jousting tournaments.

**Lara Croft: Tomb Raider** (CO, FP) Angelina Jolie plays continent-hopping, thrill-seeking, shorts-wearing, long-braided adventurer Lara Croft in *The General's Daughter* director Simon West's action flick based on the popular series of videogames.

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7:00 9:45 Mon Wed Thu 7:00 9:45

WESTMOUNT 111 Ave. Great Rd. 455-8726

**A.I.: ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE** (14A)  
12:45 3:45 6:45 9:45

**JURASSIC PARK III** (PG) No passes.

Frightening scenes of violence and gore.

Wed Thu 12:15 2:20 4:20 7:00 7:30

**THE FAST AND THE FURIOUS** (14A)

Fri Sat Sun Mon Tue 1:15 4:15 7:15 9:30

**THE SCORE** (14A) 1:00 4:00 7:10 10:00

**SHREK** (PG) 12:30 2:30 4:30 7:00 9:00

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12:40 3:40 6:45 9:40

**ATLANTIS: THE LOST EMPIRE** (PG)

12:30 2:30 4:30 7:10 9:20

**CRAZY/BEAUTIFUL** (14A) 2:00 4:10 7:40 10:00

**LARA CROFT: TOMB RAIDER** (PG)

Not suitable for younger children. 1:15 4:00 7:20 9:35

**LEGALLY BLONDE** (PG) Suggestive language.

1:15 3:30 7:20 9:35

**THE SCORE** (14A) 1:00 1:30 3:50 4:20 7:00 7:30 9:50 10:10

**SWORDFISH** (18A) 12:50 3:00 6:50 9:15



**Jurassic Park III** Steven Spielberg, who directed the first two films in this series to box office glory but probably realized that making a third would risk its turning into a *Hackasaurus Rex*, handed over the reins to one of his protégés, Joe Johnston. Johnston isn't well-known, but he's made a string of under-rated sci-fi fantasies—most notably *Jumanji* and *The Rocketeer*—that show him to have a real knack for integrating special effects into an emotionally involving story. Add in the fact that the script is credited to part to Alexander Payne and Jim Taylor, who also wrote *Election*, and you have the art second sequel that just might be worth seeing after all.

**Moulin Rouge** (CO, P) Nicole Kidman, Ewan McGregor, Jim Broadbent and John Leguizamo star in *William Shakespeare's Romeo and Juliet* director Baz Luhrmann's visually opulent, willfully anachronistic musical, set in 1895 Montmartre, about a young poet whose passion for a beautiful courtesan is thwarted by her wealthy lover.

**The Mummy Returns** (CO) Brendan Fraser, Rachel Weisz, Patricia Velasquez and Arnold Vosloo star in writer-director Stephen Sommers' sequel to his 1999 hit *The Mummy*, in which the remains of Imhotep and his lover Anck-su-Numan are brought back to life when they are exhibited at a London museum.

**Pearl Harbor** (CO, FP) Ben Affleck, Josh Hartnett and Kate Beckinsale star in *Armageddon* director Michael Bay's megabudget war epic which sets a love triangle involving two aviators and a nurse against the backdrop of the infamous 1941 Japanese attack on a Hawaiian naval base.

**Scary Movie 2** (CO, FP) Anna Faris, Shawna Wayans, Marlon Wayans, David Cross and James Woods star in director Keenen Ivory Wayans' sequel to his hit 2000 comedy *Scary Movie*, featuring scatological spoofs of famous haunted-house and Satanic-possession horror flicks.

**Sexy Beast** (GA) Ben Kingsley, Ray Winstone and Amanda Redman star in director Jonathan Glazer's

acclaimed, Pinteresque crime drama about a retired ex-con who is coerced into leaving his slothful lifestyle in a Spanish villa and pulling one last heist by a violent, unpredictable, but very persuasive former colleague.

**Shrek** (CO, FP) The voices of Mike Myers, Eddie Murphy, Cameron Diaz and John Lithgow are featured in the irreverent computer-animated fairytale spoof about a grumpy ogre who is hired by a despicable king to save a princess from a fire-breathing dragon.

**Swordfish** (CO, FP) John Travolta, Hugh Jackman, Halle Berry and Don Cheadle star in *Gone in 60 Seconds* director Dominic Sena's action flick about an international spy who is hired by the CIA to coerce a brilliant computer hacker into stealing a fortune in unused government funds.

## LEGEND

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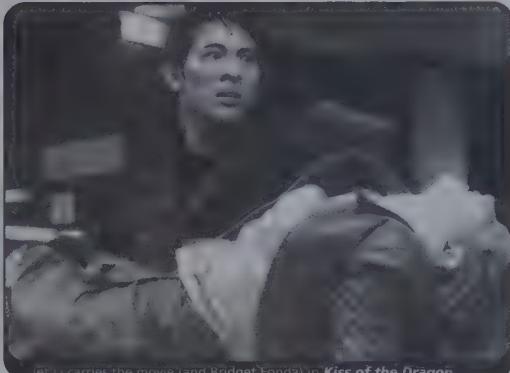
# A Besson before dying

French auteur's touch is all over fun but incoherent *Kiss of the Dragon*

BY JOSEF BRAUN

The fictional world of French filmmaker Luc Besson lets loose a very childlike, fantastical imagination within a landscape drenched in adult vice and depravity. And I suppose it's a testament to the distinctiveness of Besson's bipolar cinematic vision that a film in which he's not even credited as director so clearly bears his stamp in virtually every way. *Kiss of the Dragon*, the latest—and thus far the strongest—of Hong Kong martial arts star Jet Li's English-language vehicles, was co-produced and co-written by Besson from a story by Li. Why the project was developed so much under Besson's auspices only to be handed off to first-time director Chris Nahon, one can only guess. But having watched the film, I have to wonder if it could be the result of Besson (perhaps still recovering from the negative response to *The Messenger*) allowing himself to lay the groundwork for a fun but convoluted mess and then letting someone else take all the heat.

Compared to your average martial arts film, there's an awful lot (which is to say, too much) going on in *Kiss of the Dragon*, but it's given a surprising degree of unity thanks to Li's confident and intriguing performance. Li plays the crime-fighting acupuncturist master Liu Juan, China's top government agent, who is sent to Paris to assist the local authorities in carrying out a sensitive, top-secret mission. What exactly this mission is all about I can't say for sure (and I wonder if even the writers could tell you), but the important thing is that Li acts like he knows. He has an unmistakably



Jet Li carries the movie (and Bridget Fonda) in *Kiss of the Dragon*

**action**  
REVIEW

focussed quality; you can actually believe he's one of these best-of-the-best action heroes because of the intense way he seems to be always observing, always listening, never distracted by the temptations of women, drink or bad jokes.

## Paris is burning

The Paris Liu arrives in is a city of overwhelming corruption, a sinkhole of evil conspiracies, and this vivid setting is my favourite of the film's many, wildly diverse components. Besson seems to be mythologizing his nation's capital in a playfully unflattering manner, and the combination of this extreme milieu with the puzzlingly elaborate plot plays like something conceived by Jean-Pierre Melville then rewritten by Abel Ferrara. The police inspector Liu is sent to work with is a demonic monster played with mad mood swings and admirable relish by Besson veteran Tchéky Karyo. Over the course of *Kiss of the Dragon*, he kills dozens of civilians, force-feeds drugs to helpless prostitutes, tries to frame Liu for murder and manipulates a little girl into

being his bargaining tool. He couldn't be a more obvious bad guy if he wore a black hat and ended every sentence with an extended maniacal laugh, yet the funny part is that we never learn why he's doing any of this horrible stuff in the first place.

Add to this Bridget Fonda's hooker-with-a-heart-of-gold teaming up with Liu in a wacky-but-chaste romance that's right out of a Garry Marshall movie, as well as a fighting style that tries to be gritty and realistic while employing a series of near-misses as implausible as anything in an Indiana Jones flick. Nahon's approach to the action is certainly fast-paced and exciting, but it's also so frenetic that he omits those important connecting shots that might help explain what the hell is going on. His film is basically in the Besson tradition, but with only a fraction of the charm of Besson's best work. Still, *Kiss of the Dragon* makes for diverting entertainment and makes me hungry for the next film to showcase the talents of Li. •

## Kiss of the Dragon

Directed by Chris Nahon • Starring Jet Li, Bridget Fonda and Tchéky Karyo • Now playing

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THU 12:30 3:30 7:30 9:30  
WHAT'S THE WORST THAT COULD HAPPEN?  
(14A) THU 11:35 1:55 4:30 7:35 9:30  
ANGEL EYES (14A) THU 11:50 2:25 4:45 7:40 10:15  
THE TAILOR OF PANAMA (14A) Coarse language and sexual content. THU 11:45 2:00 4:35 7:30 10:15  
THE TRUMPET OF THE SWAN (G)  
THU 12:05 2:15 4:45 6:00

CROCODILE DUNDEE IN L.A. (PG)  
THU 11:20 2:05 4:35 7:00 9:25  
DRIVEN (PG) THU 11:10 1:50 4:40 7:10 10:00  
JOE DIRT (PG) Crude content. THU 12:00 2:30 4:45 9:35  
ENEMY AT THE GATES (14A) Graphic war violence  
THU 11:00 1:40 4:20 7:05 9:50  
SAVE THE LAST DANCE (PG) Coarse language  
THU 1:45 10:10  
THE MEXICAN (14A) Coarse language. THU 9:30  
RECESS: SCHOOL'S OUT (G) THU 11:15 1:15 3:15 6:15

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**BABY BOY** DTS Digital Fri-Sun 7:00 10:00 Mon 10:00  
**BRIDGET JONES'S DIARY** PG  
Comedy. Suggestive language. DTS Digital  
Fri-Sun 1:00 3:00 7:00 9:30

**CATS AND DOGS** G  
DTS Digital. No passes. On 2 screens  
Daily 12:40 1:40 3:20 4:20 5:15 6:20 7:20 8:20

**DR. DOLITTLE 2** PG  
DTS Digital 1:30 1:50 3:30 6:55 9:00

**THE FAST AND THE FURIOUS** 14A  
THX Fri-Sun 1:30 4:00 5:30 9:45  
DTS Digital 2:00 3:30 8:10 10:40

**FINAL FANTASY: THE SPIRITS WITHIN** PG  
DTS Digital 12:20 2:20 2:50 3:20 7:40 10:10  
THX Daily 1:20 2:20 4:00 5:40 9:10

**JURASSIC PARK III** PG  
Frightening scenes. No passes. On 2 screens  
THX Fri-Sun 1:30 2:00 3:00 3:30 5:00 6:00  
7:30 8:30 10:00 10:45

**KISS OF THE DRAGON** 18A  
Brutal violence. No passes. THX Fri-Sun 1:10 2:10 3:00 4:00 5:00 6:00 7:00 8:00 9:00 10:00

**MOULIN ROUGE** PG  
Suggestive language. DTS Digital 12:25 3:10 6:30 9:20

**PEARL HARBOR** PG  
Violent scenes. DTS Digital 12:30 4:15 8:00

**SCARY MOVIE 2** 18A  
Crude sexual content. DTS Digital On 2 screens  
DTS 2:00 2:30 3:00 4:40 5:40 7:45 8:45 9:50  
10:50

**SHREK** PG  
DTS Digital. On 2 screens  
Fri-Sun 1:00 1:20 1:45 2:30 3:30 4:50 6:45 8:50  
Mon 2:00 1:24 5:30 6:30 6:45 8:50  
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Daily 2:50 5:10 7:30 10:00

**CROUCHING TIGER, HIDDEN DRAGON** PG  
Violent scenes. Daily 4:00 2:30 7:15 9:45

**CROCODILE DUNDEE IN LOS ANGELES** PG  
Daily 2:40 5:00 8:00 10:30

**DRIVEN** PG  
Daily 2:30 4:50 7:45 10:15

**TRAFFIC** 14A  
Crude language, drug use. Daily 2:20 5:20 9:30

**VILLAGE TREE CINEMAS** G

Gerais 84 St. Albans Trail St. Albans 459-1848

**ATLANTIS: THE LOST EMPIRE** PG  
Fri Mon-Thu 3:45 6:40 9:00  
Sat-Sun 1:15 3:45 6:40 9:00

**BABY BOY** PG  
Fri Mon-Thu 3:30 6:30 9:20  
Sat-Sun 1:20 3:30 6:30 9:20

**CATS AND DOGS** G  
No passes. On 2 screens. Fri-Mon 7:00 9:00 10:00  
Sat-Sun 1:15 3:00 4:00 7:00 9:00 10:00

**CRAZY/BEAUTIFUL** 14A  
Fri Mon-Thu 3:45 6:40 7:30 9:50  
Sat-Sun 1:30 4:30 7:30 9:50

**FINAL FANTASY: THE SPIRITS WITHIN** PG  
Sat-Sun 1:15 4:15 7:10 9:40  
Sat-Sun 1:15 4:15 7:10 9:40

**LEGALLY BLONDE** PG  
Suggestive language. Fri Mon-Thu 4:45 7:20 9:30  
Sat-Sun 1:45 3:45 6:40 9:30

**MOULIN ROUGE** PG  
Suggestive language. Fri Mon-Thu 3:45 6:40 9:30  
Sat-Sun 1:45 3:45 6:40 9:30

**THE MUMMY RETURNS** PG  
Frightening scenes. Fri Mon-Thu 4:00 6:50  
Sat-Sun 1:00 3:00 6:30 8:00

**SCARY MOVIE 2** 18A  
Crude sexual content. Fri Mon-Thu 4:30 7:30  
10:00 Sat-Sun 1:45 4:30 7:30 10:00

**SHREK** PG  
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Sat-Sun 1:00 3:30 6:30 9:00

**SWORDFISH** PG  
Daily 9:50

# Everything you always wanted to know about sets

Three of Edmonton's top set designers talk about their work

By PAUL MATWYCHUK

**A** few months ago, I ran into the designer Brett Gerecke, who gently chided me for not mentioning her sets more often in my theatre reviews. She definitely had a point; it's very easy to spend so much time in a review talking about the actors and the script that no space is left over to talk about the rest of the creative team. Also, as a writer who has also acted in plays, I probably feel I'm on solid ground when I'm talking about acting and playwriting. But set design? What do I know about that?

That's why I sat down last week with three of the city's leading set designers to talk about their work—and, I guess, hopefully learn enough about it so that I can criticize them in the future. (Suckers!) My panelists were:

• **David Fraser**, whose creations include the wrestling ring for Theatre Network's *PileDriver*, the atmospheric environmental set for Concrete Theatre's recent production *Rice* and designs for Brian Webb dance shows like *Sacred Time* and *Pulsar*;

• **Brett Gerecke**, the house designer for Catalyst Theatre (*The House of Pootsie Plunket*, *Songs for Sinners*, *Fusion 2000: Let There Be Light*) and the woman behind some of the Citadel's most striking-looking recent shows, including *Romeo and Juliet*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and *Popcorn*;

• **Narda McC Carroll**, who just received a 2000/2001 Sterling Award for her set for Theatre Network's *Lawrence and Holloman*, but could just as easily have won for her work last season on *Respectable* and *Ilsa, Queen of the Nazi Love Camp*, both for Workshop West.

All three became set designers almost by accident: Fraser started out as a lighting designer, Gerecke originally planned on becoming an architect and McC Carroll comes from an acting background. But however tortuous the path that led them to their current profession (and it should be said that all of them also double as lighting designers, and McC Carroll frequently triples as a costume designer), their work certainly proves they've arrived at the proper destination. Here's our conversation.

**Vue Weekly:** Tell me a little

about your process as you read a play. Are you making sketches right from the start? How early on do you talk specifics with a director?

**Brett Gerecke:** Well, as a general rule, first I just read the script from a gut perspective. Then I read it again. Usually by the third read, I start jotting down important things—where this is supposed to be, what year it's supposed to have happened, as well as words or phrases that stick out, that feel like the guiding force of the show. That's if there

is a play. [Laughs.] A lot of the time, I don't always work with the play. But at the Citadel, for instance, I pluck out everything that feels like it's giving me direction toward a world, an emotion. Then I talk with the director—and at the Citadel, with the Shakespeares, it was an 11-month process of staying in constant dialogue with [director Tom Wood]. By the time you get to the end of it, it's a pretty time-tested design; you really feel like you've reached your destination. At Catalyst, it's completely different—sometimes I'm starting with nothing but an idea or a notion. With something like *The Blue Orphan*, [Joey Tremblay and Jonathan Christensen] will call me up and say simply, "We're interested in exploring butterflies, chaos theory, cocooning, going out and coming in, staying home and taking flight."

**VW:** So what do you do with a



David Fraser's set for *Rice*

proposal like that? I mean, it's not like that then becomes, like, a big butterfly hanging at the back of the stage.

**BG:** [Laughs.] God, no! I'd be fired! No—it's never about the obvious. It's always about the abstract, it's always about working the metaphor. I would joke with them and say, "Oh, I know where we can get these great rattan butterflies and

hang them all over the place..."

**David Fraser:** I find that often the director already has a vision of what they would like, but they generally try to let you go into the script with a completely clear mind. The first time I read a script, I generally don't write anything down. It's the second time through that I start making notes, but I don't actually draw anything down. That way, when I go in to talk with the director, I'm not stuck on any one vision. Because once you see something in your head that you want to do, it's really hard to let go of that and collaborate.

**Narda McC Carroll:** It's a truly collaborative art. Usually, the final design is as much the product of the director's take on the play as it is the designer's take on it.

**VW:** When you accepted the Sterling for *Lawrence and Holloman*, you thanked the director, Bradley Moss, for trusting you with this wild idea you had for the set. How did the concept for that design evolve—did it come out of wanting to project the titles of the scenes onto the stage?

**NM:** For me, that set came out of—I mean, that script has, like, 13 individual locations. But that's not what the play is about. It's about those two guys and their relationship and their journey. That's all that matters; the locations don't matter at all. And what I set out to do was find the best way to make it *about* those two people. And also, because you have two characters who see the world completely differently—there's the optimist and the pessimist, or however you want to put it—I didn't want to push things one way or the other. I didn't want us to see Lawrence's or Holloman's view. And so, the idea for moving ladders came to me—the characters talk about going up the ladder to success, and the play has a lot to do with power and hierarchy. I kind of talked Brad into the idea of the moving ladders, but once I did, it was a complete collaboration as to what kind of configurations we needed, where the bathtub would be located, that kind of thing.

**VW:** Do you think any of you

he knew my work, and then he saw *Romeo and Juliet* and didn't see there what he thought he knew. So somehow I broke with my past. I'm not sure if that's a backhanded compliment or not.

**DF:** I find Narda is a very textured designer. She uses a lot of fabric and things you wouldn't normally expect to see; she can acquire things and see art in them that a lot of people wouldn't. A good example is the *Workshop West Springboards* series, where she had that backdrop of paper or plastic and she lit *through* that. As for my own work, it would probably be having live trees or incorporating nature onstage. That's definitely something I enjoy. There's something about the *realness* of bringing dead branches in and lighting through them and getting a very natural effect that appeals to me.

**BG:** It's hard—you only see those designs once, so it's harder to catalogue them in your memory.

proud of the set we did for *Jesus Christ Superstar* back in February—it was a huge, multimedia production with video and slides and traps and lights everywhere. We also did *The Crucible*, which was a very naturalistic set, lots of trees; there were all these planks and everything was lit from underneath. I enjoyed both of those very much.

**BG:** I think *Songs for Sinners* is my favourite.... It transported me. It took me someplace else. I was able to work with Jon and Joey on this world that was other than the one I know. It forced me to go down a really scary road where I had no idea how it would turn out, and it was wonderful then to have people moved by it. It all came together in a pretty magical way. At the time, you don't feel that—you only see all the flaws. It took me a couple of years to feel, "We really created something there." You know, "Good for us."

**VW:** What about other people's



Narda McC Carroll's set for *Lawrence and Holloman*

**VW:** Does that bother you, that your work is sort of impermanent in that way?

**NM:** Well, the same thing goes for acting. It's exciting, but at the same time, that day when you walk into the strike and see them ripping down your set and putting it in the dumpster is a little bit sad. [Laughs.] It's so hard!

**BG:** But the flip side of that is, you never have to live with it for too long. If it was a difficult process—or even if you loved it—all you have left at the end of it are the pictures. And usually the pictures are fantastic! You can't imagine the sets looking that way—the photos freeze the moment on paper so that you can actually see the light... it's quite magical. I look at the pictures in my portfolio and think, "Holy moly—I didn't think they actually looked that good!"

**VW:** What's your favourite of your own designs?

**NM:** Oh, I really don't have an answer to that question. It's so much tied into the production, the process, the company—all of that has an impact. If you had a fabulous time working on a show, you're going to feel better about your own contribution. I can't answer you. I'm sorry. I'm bailing out.

**DF:** *Rice* and *Naomi's Road* are ones of mine that I like a lot. I also work in Fort McMurray quite a bit, which gives me a chance to work with a larger budget. Unfortunately, it's really far away, so no one here gets to see any of it. But I was very

sets? What stands out for you as a really knockout design?

**NM:** For me, it's not sets specifically—it's when everything else comes together in a completely unexpected way. The third act of [the Edmonton Opera production of] *The Rake's Progress* comes to mind. The first two acts I wasn't crazy about, but the third act *blew me away*. I'd never seen anything like it, except in books. It was a simple thing—a huge, white, sewn-up, ripped drape that they pulled from upstage all the way downstage and they had this bed underneath it. But it was stunning. I saw *An Inspector Calls* in the West End a few years ago, and that blew me away as well.

**DF:** Just about everything that Brett does stands out for me. *Songs for Sinners* was one I really enjoyed. *Popcorn*. I wished that I could have been a part of *Lawrence and Holloman*. I liked the way the actors could change it and it developed as the play went on, in much the same way that *Songs for Sinners* did.

**VW:** I once read an interview with Terry Gilliam where he was talking about making *Monty Python and the Holy Grail*. And they had no money for horses, which is how they came up with the idea for the coconut shells. "Given enough money," he said, "I could be really mediocre." Is there some truth to that, that working on a shoestring budget—not that you'd ever lobby a

SEE NEXT PAGE

# No trouble in River City

Quartet of artists bring landscapes indoors in beautiful exhibition

BY MAUREEN FENNIK

It's one thing to represent nature, and quite another to create a tangible experience of it.

That's what happens in *River City*, an exhibition of installation work curated by Catherine Crowston sprawling across the second floor of the Edmonton Art Gallery that brings together a group of four artists, working with different materials and techniques, who take the notion of landscape art into the third dimension.

Something really interesting happens in this space. The title of the exhibition may conjure up images of steamboats, barbershop quartets and musical comedies, but while *River City* has something to do with rivers, it has nothing whatsoever to do with cities—any associations with Edmonton are loose at best, and often nonexistent, unless you count the fact that Edmonton's river valley is full of water. (The notion of water is the thematic thread that runs through all the work on display.)

In some cases, such as the sculptural installation of works by Alberta artist Peter von Tiesenhausen, the reference is literal, as ground, stippled and cut steel panels are fixed to the wall, where they glimmer and waver in the light like a long panel of water. There's something elemental and even mythic about this work,

a feeling that's amplified by the sculpted boat in the middle of space, fabricated out of heavy steel cable, glittering against the steel panels and looking like it's melting into the floor. Von Tiesenhausen has constructed another, more abbreviated version of a boat out of charred willow branches and wire, which hangs suspended from the ceiling. The mirroring of these two identical forms in this space makes them seem iconic—less a boat than the *idea of a boat*, prompting thoughts of passage, discovery and exploration.

## Master's debris

These ideas are similarly addressed in Lyndall Osborne's assemblages of found materials that she has obsessively organized, categorized and contained according to various systems articulated through the construction of her sculptures. A gridded wall of shelves contains over 300 "specimens" Osborne collected over the course of 35 years: shells, bits of wire, twigs, seeds and stones have been painstakingly arranged according to colour, texture and their similarity to the other materials.

Osborne's strategy of isolating and framing this debris from its ordinary, natural context gives it a heightened specificity; the human propensity to order, contain and control experience—our compulsion to discover the relationships between even unrelated things—is made visible. In this instance, however, rationality isn't portrayed as an abstract mental process, but as something physical—a means of making tangible observa-

tions, connections and discoveries.

While Osborne's constructions seem to operate according to an internal logic all their own, Mexican artist Yolanda Gutierrez's installations look more grown than made. These beautiful works blur the boundary between form and content to the point where the two become fused into one living, breathing entity. In *The Secret*, long, tree-like structures made of rope and wrapped with tobacco leaves and feathers fill the space, inviting spectators to wander through them as they would a forest. It's as if the artist has created her own lifeform.

## Sphere factor

This organic quality—not an image of nature, but the sense of something natural in and of itself—is also conveyed in *El Espejo* (*The Mirror*). Here, 1,500 tiny blown glass spheres filled with water hang from the ceiling like giant raindrops frozen in mid-flight. The effect is magical. Each small sphere holds the same reflected image as the other, reflected hundreds of times. The fragility, clarity and coherence of this work finds expression throughout the *River City* exhibition. Each piece seems to develop the suggestive associations of the others, creating a space that's doesn't so much depict the *idea of landscape* as it is a landscape in its own right—a place where visual representation is transformed into its own living, breathing reality. ☀

time to develop it.

**NM:** It's the good/fast/cheap triangle—you can only have two, never all three. You can have it good and fast, but it won't be cheap; you can have it fast and cheap, but it won't be good; or you can have it good and cheap, but it won't be fast. Although sometimes you do get lucky—with *Respectable*, all the pillars were recycled siding we got for free. And if we hadn't gotten it for free, we wouldn't have been able to have that element.

**BG:** For *The Blue Orphan*, we initially had the idea that one of the characters would have all these big, clear blue Sierra Springs water jugs around him. We wound up not using that idea, but in the meantime, we got 15 of these free Sierra water jugs. And no way were they just going to sit out in the backyard. So we wound up stacking them up in the lobby, which people probably might not even remember. But we got them for free! You feel a certain commitment to use things that are free.

**WV:** Is there anything you would like people to know about set designing—any misconceptions you'd like to clear up or things you would like people to appreciate?

**BG:** I think there's a myth out there among non-theatre people that there's a whole stock of sets down in the theatre basement that we kind of

go down and pluck items from.

**NM:** That's because of that whole *Phantom/Les Miz* thing—these big tours they keep remounting where each production is done exactly the same way, and people don't realize, you know, that *that's not the norm*. Each show is inherently unique, the product of creative minds making all sorts of individual choices. Another thing most people don't appreciate is that set designers in Canada are almost always in charge of designing or choosing the props as well. Which is often as big a job as designing the set.

**DE:** I think another thing people don't know—and maybe it's something they don't need to know—is the technical side of it, just how much actual math and drafting go into it. It can be scary sometimes; with a larger show, sometimes it can involve up to two weeks of solid drafting. Another important thing is just how much we depend on the technical team. The carpenters who build the show are just as important as the actors on the stage, in my opinion. They're artists as well. The ones who take a pride in their carpentry are the ones where you can tell when the design is finished and the set is up that everyone on board cared about it. And those, generally, are the shows people notice and go, "Wow. What a show." ☀

## visual arts REVUE

## Set designers

Continued from previous page

theatre company to give you less money to work with—can be beneficial to your imagination?

**BG:** Well, having no money does force you to be *unbelievably* creative. But I don't think the challenges get any smaller at big theatres. Tom Wood says, "The paintbox doesn't necessarily get any bigger." And it's true. But it's often more satisfying to make something work with nothing. At Catalyst, we recycle *everything*. We recycle our stuff, we recycle other people's stuff. Often, the moment of inspiration comes from walking into the backyard there, looking around and saying, "Hmmm. We've got a lot of mesh. Maybe I should try doing something with that."

**DE:** Having no money does force you to go to other areas in your mind and come up with something else besides just the box set. Take a show like *The Tourist*, where we had no budget, which was in my opinion one of the best shows I've seen in a long time—and not just design-wise. [E. Cherie Hoyle] did the set, and she came up with all sorts of great stuff just using plastic and chain and all the old 4x8 platforms. Working on a shoestring can be a lot of fun, as long as you have the

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### ART BEAN GALLERY AND FRAME

8108 100th Ave., St. Albert, 459-3679. Sculptured metal furniture by Rogelio Menz. Pottery by Joanna Drummond and Joan Toed. Action in steel by Shane Repka. Watercolours by Carol Yake, Rich Williams and Thomas Love. Until July 15.

### CENTRE D'ARTS VISUELS DE L'ALBERTA 20

80, 8627-91 St., 461-3427. PHANTASM:

Jane Ash Poitras' acrylics and collages; Dave Belize's woodcrafts. Until July 18.

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•IN/OUT, Art in the City: 47871571. Onsite at Edmonton Centre during the 2001 games. Artwork by senior high school artists from across the province. July 27-Aug. 12.

•GALLERY Theatre, 426-2122. LECTURE

SERIES: Dr. Rodolphe el-Khoury, Associate Professor from the Faculty of Architecture, Landscape and Design, Director of the Master of Urban Design Programme and Director of the Architecture Programme at

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4th Fl., 10229-105 St., 707-2305. •Open: 11am-7pm (July 20-28). Exhibit featuring new works by emerging visual artists. July 19-28. Opening reception: THU, July 19, 7pm-midnight. Live music by the Viper Archers.

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SERIES: Dr. Rodolphe el-Khoury, Associate Professor from the Faculty of Architecture, Landscape and Design, Director of the Master of Urban Design Programme and Director of the Architecture Programme at

Dalhousie University, Halifax, NS. Until Aug. 26.

•PIECES OF A DREAM: Tomoya Uchida's first solo exhibition in Canada. Large etchings, prints. Until July 15.

•FORT DOOR: 10308-81 Avenue, 432-7535.

Selection of West Coast Indian silver and gold jewellery by D. Lancaster. Eskimo soapstone carvings by Lydia Qumak. Until July 30.

•OPEN TUESDAYS: 10am-5pm. •DISTINCTLY

CANADIAN: Canadian landscapes featuring Newfoundland artist David Blackwood's etchings. Introducing Nova Scotia's Scott MacLeod. Quebec painters Pierre Bedard, Bruno Côté and Louise Martineau. Saskatchewan painter Captain British Columbia. David Laramore. From Alberta, works by Kathleen Hannahan, W.H. Webb and Ned Patterson. Until July 30.

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•PARIS MARKET, LE PETIT SALON

Upstairs, 10363-104 Street, 424-2511.

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•SNAP GALLERY

10137-104 St., 423-1492. •Open noon-5pm Tue-Sat. STANDING ROOM ONLY: The 1st annual members' show. Until Aug. 25.

•SOSA SOCIETY OF ARTISTS

4th Fl., 10229-105 St., 707-2305. •Open: 11am-7pm (July 20-28). Exhibit featuring new works by emerging visual artists. July 19-28. Opening reception: THU, July 19, 7pm-midnight. Live music by the Viper Archers.

•STRATHCONA PLACE CENTRE

10831 University Ave., 433-5807. •Open: Mon-Fri 9am-4pm. Acrylic landscape paintings by Helmut Scherer. Until Aug. 2.

•THE ART GALLERY

10186-106 Street, 488-6611. •Open Mon-Fri 10am-5pm; Sat 10am-3pm; Sun 1-5pm. •THE CANADIAN FURNITURE & DESIGN EXHIBITION: Visual Arts Festival. Glimpse into the boudoirs of Canada's furniture elite. Beautiful to bizarre, this exhibit showcases some of the finest studio furniture in Canada. Until Sept. 1. •DISCOVERY GALLERY: GLASS HAPPENS! Part of The Works Visual Arts Festival. The Alberta Craft Council celebrates Carol Jane Campbell and Jim Holmstrom's glass hot shop with an exhibition of new works. Until July 28.

•ART BEAN GALLERY AND FRAME

8108 100th Ave., St. Albert, 459-3679. Sculptured metal furniture by Rogelio Menz. Pottery by Joanna Drummond and Joan Toed. Action in steel by Shane Repka. Watercolours by Carol Yake, Rich Williams and Thomas Love. Until July 15.

•CENTRE D'ARTS VISUELS DE L'ALBERTA 20

80, 8627-91 St., 461-3427. PHANTASM:

Jane Ash Poitras' acrylics and collages; Dave Belize's woodcrafts. Until July 18.

•DOUGLAS UDELL GALLERY

10332-124 Street, 488-4445. EXTRAS NECESSITIES '01:

Defining excess and celebrating necessity,

an emerging artist exhibition with guest curated Dean Drever. Until Aug. 31.

•EDMONTON ART GALLERY

2 St. Winston Churchill Sq., 422-6225. [www.eg.ca](http://www.eg.ca). •Open Mon-Fri 10am-5pm; Sat 10am-8pm; Sun 9am-5pm.

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4th Fl., 10

## Continued from previous page.

um-quality restoration in progress, or take a guided tour of hundreds of "diamonds in the rust" in the warehouse.

**RUTHERFORD HOUSE** 11153 Saskatchewan Drive, U of A Campus, 427-3995. •Open Tue-Sun 12 noon-5pm. Costumed interpreters recreate daily household activities. Admission: \$3 adult, \$2 senior/youth; \$8 family, kids 6 and under free.

**UKRAINIAN CULTURAL HERITAGE VILLAGE** Hwy 16, 25 minutes East of the city, 662-3020. Open May 15 to Labour Day: daily 10am-5pm; Labour Day to Oct: Thanksgiving weekend: daily 10am-4pm. Churches, homes, and rural town buildings showing the Ukrainian settlement in Alberta from 1890-1930. SUN 15 (10am-6pm): Kalyna Fest. TIX: \$6.50 adult, \$3 youth 7-17 yrs., \$5.50 senior, free for child 6 and under, \$1.50 family. Group rates available.

## KIDS STUFF

**CALDER LIBRARY** 12522-132 Avenue, 496-7090. THU 12 (2pm): *Robber Rabbit*, a puppet show, 3-12 yrs. TUE 17 (2pm): *Kittens on guard*, 3-10 yrs. THU 19 (2pm): *A tail of tails or A twist in the tail*, Readers' Theatre. TUE 24 (2pm): *Fabulous fractured fairy tales*.

**CAPILANO LIBRARY** 201 Capilano Mall, 98 Ave, 50 St., 496-1802. SAT 14 (10am-12 and 1-3pm): *Talk to the animals*, 6-12 yrs. Pre-register. WED 18 (1-3pm): *Paint-it face*.

**CASTLE DOWNS LIBRARY** 9 Lake Beauvaris Mall, 1533 Castle Downs Road, 496-1804. WED 18 (2pm): *Storybook bingo*, 3-12 yrs.

**CITY HALL** Sir Winston Churchill Square, City Hall Plaza, 422-6223, ext. 249, 5th Annual *Loonie Art Laboratory* Tent. *"Slipstream and Art Dreams"*. Until July 22. \$1 each per project.

**EDMONTON ART GALLERY** 2 Sir Winston Churchill Square, 422-6223. •*Loonie Art Laboratory* Tent, *Slipstream and Art Dreams*, 4-12 yrs., in Sir Winston Churchill Square, 422-6223, ext. 249. Until Aug. 17. *Art classes and camps* run weekly. Until Aug. 17. *Summer programs* are inspired by the *River City* exhibit and explore human interaction with the environment.

**EDMONTON CHINESE COMMUNITY SERVICES CENTRE** 429-3111. Asian-Canadian Youth Team, 11-16 yrs. Meets for two Saturday activities each month. Recreational, volunteer, learning opportunities. Workshops and discussions on various youth topics. Various locations. Until March 2002.

**GRANT MACEWAN COLLEGE** Jasper Place Campus, 10045-156 St., 496-4343. Musical theatre for kids, 8-15 yrs. July 16-20, 9am-3pm.

**HIGHLANDS LIBRARY** 6710-118 Avenue, 496-1806. TUE 17 (2pm): *Sand and mask*, 3-12 yrs.

**IDYLWYLDE LIBRARY** 8310-88 Ave., 496-1806. WED 25 (2pm): *Once Upon a Totem*, 5-8 yrs. Pre-register.

**INDIGO BOOKS MUSIC AND CAFÉ** 1000 100 St., South Edmonton Common, 432-4488. *Indigo Kids Summer Reading Club*, Grades 1-7. Until Aug. 25. •*Every SAT* (11am): *Who Needs Cartoons?* •*Every SAT* (2pm): *Summer sun crafts*, 6-11 yrs. SAT 21: *Camp* (11am): *Stories*, 6-11 yrs. (2pm): *Camp crafts*. Hot dog barbecue.

**JASPER PLACE LIBRARY** 9010-156 Street, 496-1810. •*Every WED* (7-7:30pm): Family fun, 3-6 yrs. Until Aug. 29. Pre-register. THU 12 (2pm): *Gingerbread Baby and Hedgehogs*, 5-8 yrs. Pre-register. TUE 17 (2pm): *Dream up a dreamcatcher*, 6-11 yrs. Pre-register. TUE 24 (2pm): *Bubble, bubble*, 7-12 yrs. Pre-register.

**LECTURES/MEETINGS**

**THE EDMONTON COMMUNITY SHAMANIC DRUMMING CIRCLE** 736-3780, 951-2324. Learn Shamanic journeying. Meet your power animals and guides. Weekly meetings.

**EXPRESSZION CAFÉ, MARKET AND MEETING PLACE** 9142 St. & 118 Avenue, 474-6058. THU 12 (Noon-1pm): *The Lunch Hour Talks: The Next City: Social Well-Being and Quality of Life in Edmonton with Robert Nobe*. Free.

**GAZEBO PARK** 83 Ave., 104 St., 414-0702. SAT 21 (10am): *Free Klondike breakfast* with Raj Panhu, MDA.

**INDIGO BOOKS MUSIC AND CAFÉ** 1000 100 St., South Edmonton Common, 432-4488. •*Every FRIDAY* (5-9:30pm): *Intuitive card reading* by Brett Murray. Session cost applies. Until July 20.

**LONDONDERRY LIBRARY** Londonderry Mall, 137 Avenue, 66 Street, 496-1814. TUE 17 (2pm): *Fabulous fractured fairy tales*, 3-5 yrs. TUE 24 (2pm): *A tale of tails or A twist in the tail*, Readers' Theatre.

**MILL WOODS LIBRARY** Mill Woods Town Centre, 2331-66 St. Street, 496-1818. •*Every TUESDAY* (10am-12pm): *Drop-in*, 2pm. Family Storytime Fun. Drop-in. THU 12 (2pm): *Whoppers*. Tall tales. FRU 13 (2pm): *Arabian Nights*. THU 17 (2pm): *Cree tricksters*. THU 19 (2pm): *Tall tales*. TUE 20 (2pm): *Legends from around the world*. TUE 24 (2pm): *Once upon a time machine*.

**PENNY MCKEE LIBRARY** Abbotsfield Mall, 3210-118 Avenue, 496-7839. THU 12 (2pm): *Sand and mask*, 5-12 yrs.

**PROFILES PUBLIC ART GALLERY** 19 Perron Street, St. Albert, 460-4310. •*Every TUE* (1:30-2:30pm): *Start-and-Paint* and *Preschooler Program*. \$4.50 fee. Pre-regis-

ter. •*Every SAT* (1-4pm): *Art-Ventures*, 5-12 yrs. \$2 donation. •*Arts and Heritage Day* Camps: July 16-20, 23-27, 30-Aug. 3, Aug. 6-10, 13-17. Half-and-full-day camps mixing history and art. Pre-register. SAT 14 (1-4pm): *Art-Ventures*. Old Time Country Fair at the Little White School in St. Albert. TUE 17 (10am-3:30pm): *Summer Storytime* and *Preschool Storytime*. Bird songs. \$4.50 fee. SAT 21 (1-4pm): *Art-Ventures*. Travel to the far east, learn about the art of shadow puppets, create your own puppets, 5-12 yrs. \$2 donation. TUE 24 (1-30-2:30pm): *Start-and-Preschooler Program*. Amazing metamorphosis. \$4.50 fee.

**RIVERBEND LIBRARY** 460 Riverbend Square, Rabbit Hill Rd., Terwillegar Drive, 494-5311. •*Every TUE* (10:30am): *Summer Storytime* and *agile acrobatics*. Aged 2-6. •*Every THU* (7-7:30pm): *Summer Storytime*, all ages. Until August 30. Drop-in. THU 12 (2pm): *Fractured fairtales and a hint of speckled frog tongue*. Pre-register. SAT 21 (2pm): *Silly summer Saturday*, 3-12 yrs. Pre-register. WED 25 (2pm): *Twisted tales*, 3-12 yrs. Pre-register.

**THE SECOND STORY** Mill Woods Town Centre, 2331-66 St., 413-6971. FRI 13 (10:30am): *Story time* with *Brian Munro*. SAT 14 (10:30am): *Story time with Mike Anderson*. SAT 14 (10:30am): *Story time with Val Dickau*. WED 18 (10:30am): *Story time with Mike*. SAT 14 (11:30am): *Family crafts*. SAT 14 (2-3pm): *Youth writing club*.

**SOUTHCOTE LIBRARY** Southgate Shopping Centre, 496-1822. *Every WED* (10:15-10:45am): *Summer drop-in*. Pre-storytime, 3-5 yrs. Until Aug. 22. •*Every THU* (7-7:30pm): *Teddy Bear Storytime*, 3-5 yrs. Until Aug. 23. TUE 17 (2pm): *Fractured fairtales and a hint of speckled frog tongue*. TUE 24 (2pm): *Summer puppet show*.

**SPRUCEWOOD LIBRARY** 11555-95 St., 496-7099. WED 17 (2pm): *Mad Hatter's Tea Party*, 4-14 yrs. Pre-register.

**ST. MARY'S MILLER LIBRARY** 7 Sir Winston Churchill Sq., 496-1800. TUE 17 (2pm): *Once Upon a Time Machine*, 3-10 yrs. Pre-register. THU 24 (2pm): *Mad Hatter's Tea Party*, 4-14 yrs. Pre-register.

**ST. ALBERT CHILDREN'S THEATRE** St. Albert Place, 5 St. Anne Street, 459-1585, 458-2022. Summer drama camp: *Camp Giddy and Camp Silly*, 5-7 yrs.; *Camp Wacky and Camp Kooky*, 8-10 yrs.; *Camp Giggles*, 3-4 yrs. Camps for youths up to 19 yrs.

**STRATHCONA LIBRARY** 8331-104 Street, 496-1826. THU 12 (2pm): *Turtle tales*, 3-12 yrs. Pre-register. SAT 19 (2pm): *Tale of the Tail*, 3-5 yrs. 3-12 yrs. Pre-register. THU 26 (2pm): *Grandma tales and Grandma stories*: stories from their past, 6-12 yrs. Pre-register.

**TAKE THE LEAP DRAMA CAMP** Knox Metropolitan United Church, 8307-109 St., 988-0576. Session II: 14-16 yrs. July 17-27, 9am-3pm. Pre-registered by July 13.

**VALLEY ZOO** Buena Vista Rd., 134 Street, 496-6911. •*Open daily*. Home to more than 100 exotic, endangered and native species. SUN 15: *Zoo-fari* adventures, bird's eye view.

**VICTORIA PARK** 446-4314. *Lost in the Woods*: Rangers teach kids what to do should they become lost in an outdoor setting. For kids ages 5+ yrs. and their parents. July 29, 2001, 10-11:30am.

**WOODCRAFT LIBRARY** 13420-114 Avenue, 496-1830. WED 18 (2pm): *Time to tell*, 6-11 yrs. WED 25 (2pm): *Time warped tales*, 5+ yrs.

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ter. Poverty in Action Society. Speakers: Hugh MacDonald, Michael Phair, Leslie Ragoius, Arlene Chapman.

**PUBLIC MEETING** Evansdale Community Hall, 1510 Avenue, 496-5816. WED 18 (7pm): *Discussing the proposed changes for Eaux Claires Neighbourhood Structure Plan*.

**SWEETWATER CAFÉ** 12427-102 Ave., 412-9582. THU 12: *The Power of Relationships to Build Successful Business* presented by Isabel Bernette of PC Corp.

**WASKAHEGAN TRAIL ASSOCIATION (WTA)** Bonnie Doon Recycle, 85 St., 85 Ave., 434-7390. SUN 15 (9am): *Free guided hike*, approx. 10 km at Camrose City Trails. Bring lunch and beverage. •*4675-6756*. SUN 22 (9am): *Free guided hike*, approx. 10 km at North Miquelon area. Bring lunch and beverage.

## LITERARY EVENTS

**THE BACKROOM VODKA BAR** 10324-82 Avenue, 490-1410. •*Every TUE* (7:30pm sign-up; 8pm show): *Open stage poetry*. Word performance poets at the edge of the abyss with the Raving Poets Band. Until August 14.

**"B" SCENE STUDIOS** 8212-104 St., 437-5014. SAT 14 (8pm): *Indiependence Day*: A pay-what-you-can fundraiser for the *Stroll of Poets* Anthology. Word addicts, liberate your art on an open stage of spoken word to experimental music. This evening will be put onto a CD.

**CAPILANO LIBRARY** 201 Capilano Mall, 98 Avenue, 50 Street, 496-1802. •*Every second WED* (7:30-8:30pm): *Capilano Book Club*.

**RUTHERFORD HOUSE** University of Alberta Campus, 11553 Saskatchewan Drive, 988-8554. TUE 24 (7pm): *reading by award-winning poet Di Brandt*. Free.

**SOUTHCOTE LIBRARY** Southgate Shopping Centre, 496-1822. *Adult summer reading club*. Until Aug. 25.

**ST. ALICE MILNER LIBRARY** 7 Sir Winston Churchill Square, 496-1888. THU 12 (10am-12): *Talking Book Club*. \$2 for refreshments.

## LIVE COMEDY

**THE COMEDY FACTORY** 34414 Clark Trail North, THU 12-14 SAT 14-16 MC, comedian Dave Nystrom and the Factory Improv Players. THU 19-SAT 21 MC: comedian Henry O. Watson and the Factory Improv Players.

## SPECIAL EVENTS

**THE ALANO CLUB** 9929-103 St., 423-1807. •*Every FRIDAY* and *SAT* (9pm-2am): *Sober dance with DJ Jack*. TIX: \$5.

**LA BOHEME RESTAURANT** 6427-112 Ave., 474-5693. SAT 14: *Celebrating our 19th birthday and Bastille Day*.

**CITY HALL PLAZA** Sir Winston Churchill Square, 702-2001. THU 19 (noon-1:30pm): *The ITU Triathlon World Championship opening ceremony*.

**EDMONTON GHOST TOURS** In front of the Reseter Station, 100 St. & 107 Ave., 422-2283. *Aug. 4-6 31-37pm*: *Theatrical exploration of the ghosts and unknown through Old Strathcona*. Your guide will entertain you with stories of the paranormal, the vengeful deceased, strange spirits and fiendish phantom. Mon-Thu nights, 9pm. Until Aug. 28. (Not during the Fringe Festival). TIX: \$5.

**EDMONTON INTERNATIONAL STREET PERFORMERS FESTIVAL** Various venues and Sir Winston Churchill Sq., 425-5162. *Aug. 10-12*: *Big Tent*. Family Sunday on the Square. FRI 13-SAT 14 (8pm): *Noches Locas* (Crazy Nights). TIX: \$10 adv, \$12 at door. •*SUN 15*: *Festival Music Sunday*.

**EDMONTON KLONDIKE DAYS** *Downtown*, THU 19 (9am): *Klondike Days* parade. SUN 22: *Klondike Sunday*. Promenade. Free. TUE 24-FRI 27: *Klondike fun tub derby*. Free. •*Sir Winston Churchill Sq.*, 420-1757. *Taste of Edmonton*: July 24-28, 11am-1pm TIX: \$7.50 ea or a sheet of 30 for \$20. •*SUN 27* on the *Quintec* until 8pm.

**EDMONTON KLONDIKE PARK** 9797 Jasper Ave., East Terrace, 4996-8200. WED 18 (10:30am-1:30pm): *Seniors Klondike picnic* in the park. Free.

**•NORTHLANDS PARK**, 451-8000. *Klondike chuckwagon derby*. July 21-24, 26. TIX: TicketMaster.

**HAWRELAK PARK** 702-2001. ITU Triathlon World Championship. July 21-22.

**MILL CREEK RAVINE** West side, North 4th Avenue, 432-7927. SUN 15 (3:30pm): *Dance in Mill Creek Ravine*: Folk, ceilidh, and English country dance to live music. Beginner welcome. TIX: Pass the hat.

**PROFILES PUBLIC ART GALLERY** 19 Perron St., St. Albert, 460-4310. FRI 13 (noon-8pm): *Yard sale*.



BY ROCKIE GARDINER

**ARIES** (Mar 20-Apr 19) Anticipate big changes around the time your Mars ruler changes direction on the 19th. Since Mars went retrograde in mid-May, dealings with foreigners, academics or athletes, not to mention a skittish Sagittarius, may have presented problems for impatient Aries. If those folks played hard to get or simply gave you a hard time during the past two months, they'll be back soon enough, ready to make amends and pick up where they left off. But, thanks to adoring attention from Venus, you could be too involved in a romantic escapade to care.

**Taurus** (Apr 20-May 20) These can be two tough weeks, with too many responsibilities, too little co-operation, even outright opposition. It starts when your Venus ruler runs into a roadblock as it conjuncts strict Saturn, the nasty naysayer. Once you extricate yourself from that situation, you could go head-to-head with a macho man who doesn't pull his punches. A strong sexual attraction makes the encounter more thrilling, but anymore Pluto and Mars gang up on Venus, things tend to get dangerous, sometimes violent. Be careful.

**GEMINI** (May 21-Jun 20) The first test of your newfound fortitude and unending patience (or a Gemini's patience) just two of the many virtues Saturn develops as it transits your sign—comes when light-hearted, lovable Venus and stern Saturn conjoin. Will you take fun and flirtation seriously or will the sensible side of you prevail? No matter which route you choose, you're bound to meet with friction when Venus faces off against Mars next week. This is not entirely a bad thing. The sexual tension created by the tight opposition is really hot. And pretty rare.

**CANCER** (June 21-July 22) Two full moons in a month makes the second one a *blue moon*, but what would a Moon Child call the second Cancer new moon of 2001? Because the first Cancer new moon on the solstice was a total solar eclipse, as well as the start of a new 19-year cycle of eclipses, the new moon on the 20th won't be quite as monumental. This one will be more personal, more geared to what you would like to make happen to you and for you. So take time to think about the new moon magic you need to make, and do it on the 20th after 3:44 p.m. EDT/12:44 p.m. PDT.

**LEO** (July 23-Aug 22) Lions could receive more than their fair allotment, but not quite the lion's share, as a result of the conflict between legal eagles, a friend and a family member. You might also be asked to draw a line between business and pleasurable pursuits and not cross it as freely or as frequently. Weighing the pros and cons listening to your head or following your heart is how you'll spend these lazy, hazy days of summer, at least until Leo starts on the 22nd. Then you get to step up to the plate and take your best shot.

**Virgo** (Aug 23-Sept 22) Both stay-at-home artisan types and gadabout adventurers may have to make choices this month that'll have a major effect on their careers and family lives. Consider all the alternatives with your customary thoroughness, but wait until assertive Mars turns direct on the 19th and picks up some momentum before you decide to act. The next two weeks can be stressful, you might feel that other people's agendas revolve around you like you're the rope instead of the prize in the tug-of-war they're waging.

**LIBRA** (Sept 23-Oct 22) Librans are more personally involved in what is going on than Leos are; however, you stand to benefit in a similar fashion. For some, the contest taking place will be about style, wit and artistry; for others, the opposition they encounter will be played out in the fields of academia and athletics. But no matter where your particular talent lies, you will attract two different types: the teacher/mentor with sterling credentials and the subtle manipulator with dishonorable intentions. Have fun, play safe.

**SCORPIO** (Oct 23-Nov 21) That summer romance you've been nurturing heats up dramatically while affectionate Venus comes face to face with Pluto and Mars, your co-ruling planets. One of two things might happen: either the relationship will grow even more passionate or one of you will get really pissed off and cut off contact entirely. No matter what, you become more sure of yourself, less accommodating and responsive to others after Mars comes out of retrograde on the 19th. And, like magic, you'll notice that money is flowing more freely.

**SAGITTARIUS** (Nov 22-Dec 21) Far be it for me to maintain that the world revolves around Sagittarius; nevertheless, this week our sign is one of the two pivotal forces at work. The other is Gemini, the sign in which we're supposed to find our soulmates. And who among us doesn't have history with the Twins? Anyway, after Venus, the planet of hugs and kisses, teams up with serious-minded Saturn in Gemini, she gets so strong, so obdurate, she dares to challenge sexy Pluto and Mars in Sag. This serves mainly to what our appetite for more action, which we should see after Mars turns direct on the 19th.

**CAPRICORN** (Dec 22-Jan 20) It will come as no surprise to you that Venus, arbiter of style, harmony and affection, is so close to your Saturn ruler that they are as one. Venus's presence makes you softer while it sharpens your eye for beauty. The merger of the two planets this week starts a long-term cycle that has its highs and lows the farther away from Saturn Venus travels. Take notice of what's going on at art and armour-wise now, because this theme, event or relationship will keep you hopping until next May.

**AQUARIUS** (Jan 21-Feb 18) Like your Leo partner, you'll benefit indirectly from what goes down between friends and family. But as the month ends, the goodies—both the great stuff and the smiles—will come directly to you. Knowing that happy times are in the cards should make it easier to assume more responsibility at work or to use the opportunity the Cancer new moon on the 20th provides to take someone under your wing. This is also a good time to start a new exercise routine such as swimming or merrily rowing (and rocking) the boat.

**PISCES** (Feb 19-Mar 19) You're being pushed to make a decision that could affect your position in the family or alter the direction of your career. Pisces, like Gemini and Virgo, and the other mutable signs, tend to react to situations instead of creating them—unless, of course, you're a bona fide drama queen trying to build up your role. But if you truly feel that you're caught in the middle of a power struggle between external forces, do what a fish is meant to do—swim away, be elusive and pop up later when the smoke has cleared. ☀

**SOURDOUGH RAFT RACE** North Saskatchewan River, 423-2822. SUN 15: Rafts on the river.

## WORKSHOPS

**ALUMNI HOUSE** University of Alberta Campus, 988-8554. *Women and Words*: 5th annual Saga Seminars summer writing workshops with Europe Scarfone, Dr. Brandt workshop, July 19-21, 2001. For new and experienced women writers of poetry, poetry or memoir. Fees: One session \$225. Two or more sessions, \$200/session. Pre-register.

**BRAHMA KUMARIS MEDITATION CENTRE** 207, 10132-105 Street, 425-1050. Learn the art of Raja Yoga meditation. Pre-register. Free.

**CALDER LIBRARY** 12522-132 Avenue, 496-5656. SAT 14 (2pm): Edmonton Community Network Demonstration. Pre-register.

**GATSTOWN LIBRARY** 9 Lake Beaumont Mall, 15333 Castle Downs Road, 414-5656. THU 19 (7pm): Edmonton Community Network Demonstration. SAT 21 (10:30am): Computer basics.

**EDMONTON CHINESE COMMUNITY SERVICES CENTRE** 9540-102 Avenue, 429-3111. Beginners Mandarin conversation classes. Suitable for adults. Basic vocabulary, simple greetings, dining, shopping, and using the telephone. Instructor is native Mandarin. \$100.00 for 6 weeks. \$13.50 members of the Edmonton Chinese Community Services Centre; \$170 non-members. Annual membership is \$5. Registration is limited to 10 students. Pre-register.

**GRANT MACLEAN COLLEGE** Jasper Place Campus, 10045-156 Street, 497-4336. •Figurative and abstract sculpture workshop, July 16-20. •Introduction to the basics of acrylic painting workshop, July 23-27. •Classical guitar with Rachel Gauk. July workshop. •Jazz guitar with Michael Rubino. July workshop. •Introduction to Dreamweaver and Fireworks, July 14-15. •After Effects, July 14-15. •Introduction to Digital Film workshop, July 16-20. •Advanced Web Design, July 21-22. •Introduction to Photoshop, July 21-22. •Macromedia Flash, July 28-29. •Introductory Macintosh, Tue, Thu, August 2-16.

**INDIGO BOOKS, MUSIC AND CAFÉ** 1837-99 Street, South Edmonton Common, 432-4488. •Every TUE (7-9:30pm): Holistic health info sessions. Session cost applies.

**MERRYWOOD DANCE ACADEMY** Queen Mary Park Community League Hall, 10844-117 Street, 544-5005. Saturday classes. Beginners welcome. Teen, jazz and tap. Pre-register.

**RATCHADHAM TEMPLE** 12520-135 Avenue, 489-7754. Free meditation instruction course. A new meditation approach for all people. Mon-Fri 7:30pm to October. Pre-register.

**SUSSEX GALLERIES** 290 Saddleback Road, 988-2260. Adults and kids art classes, professional instruction, with small class sizes.

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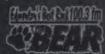


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